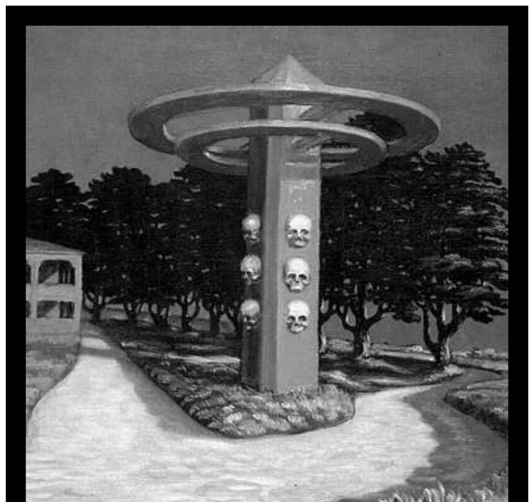
Crossroads
digest
N 5/2010



European Humanities University
Center for Advanced Studies and Education (CASE), the project «Social Transformations in the Borderland: Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova»

Crossroads Digest N 5/2010
The journal for the studies of Eastern European borderland
ISSN 2029-199X

The journal has been published since 2007.

On a cover the picture of artist J. Drozdovich "Over a chasm" (1931) is used.

Address of the editorial office and publisher:
European Humanities University
Tauro str. 12, LT-01114
Vilnius Lithuania
E-mail: publish@ehu.lt

Format 70x108 $^{1}/_{16}$. Offset paper. Offset printing.
Conditions of the printer's sheet 10,5. Circulation 299 copies.
Printed: "Petro Ofsetas"
Žalgirio g. 90, LT-09303
Vilnius Lithuania

Authors of the publications are responsible for the opinions presented in the articles.

EHU expresses its sincere gratitude for assistance and financial support of the project to Carnegie Corporation, New York.

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David R. Marples

CHERNOBYL: TOWARD THE 25TH ANNIWERSARY

Introduction

The Chernobyl disaster has given rise to numerous analyses and reports, both scientific and journalistic, as well as to films and documentaries.[1] It has been the subject of widespread and unresolved debate as to the number of victims, current medical effects, and the impact of low-level radiation on people's health. Above all perhaps it has reflected a rift between what one might term "the scientific community" and popular writing and inquiries. It has receded from world attention over time – indeed it is only commemorated on significant anniversaries in the Western world – but its effects are still with us. In some respects, partly as a result of natural decomposition of radio-nuclides and partly as a consequence of economic factors, they have worsened rather than improved over time. In Belarus, for example, the contaminated lands have mostly been re-cultivated; in truth, farmers have lived off the land since the 1986 accident with scant attention to what they are eating.

In September 2005, a consortium called the Chernobyl Forum, including a number of UN organizations headed by the International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as certain selected branches of the Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian governments, issued a Report, totaling some 600 pages in length, which purported to offer a "definitive" account of the disaster and its consequences.[2] The report's main conclusions were as follows: up to 4,000 people could eventually die from radiation exposure, but by mid-2005, the death toll from Chernobyl-induced radiation stood at less then 50; 2,200 deaths could be expected among 200,000 liquidators working at the site in 1986-87; because of the changing pattern of radio-nuclide breakdown, the emergency zones designated in the 1980s need to be redefined; and the worst health impact to date has been the outbreak of thyroid

gland cancer among 4,000 children, but this has resulted in only 9 deaths.[3] The Forum Report maintained that the greatest enemies today to those living in areas contaminated by Chernobyl are poverty and the difficulties caused by relocation. In turn, the stresses induced by the events had led to a decline in mental health, and the chief dilemma currently is the psychological toll. The feeling that Chernobyl is the cause of all problems had also led to a dependency on the state rather than self-help and local initiatives, and prompted the Forum to criticize those Chernobyl-related programs that it considered enhance rather than reduce this dependency. Overall, said spokesperson Michael Repacholi: "The sum total of the Chernobyl Forum is a reassuring message."

In April 2006, Greenpeace issued an alternative report that disputed virtually all the findings of the Chernobyl Forum, and which was based largely on contributions from scientists at government institutions of Ukraine (primarily) and Russia, and one contributor from Belarus. This account focused exclusively on health effects. Concerning the CFR total of 4,000 additional deaths from Chernobyl, it claimed that in Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine alone, the accident had caused "an estimated 200,000 additional deaths between 1990 and 2004." It added that cancers were frequent in the affected areas and among the liquidators, including leukemia. In Belarus, it cited a 40% rise in cancers between 1990 and 2000, but in the contaminated regions, such as Homel Oblast, the increase was over 50%. The incidence of thyroid gland cancer in the highly irradiated Bryansk region doubled that in Russia as a whole over the decade 1988-98 and by 2004 was triple the national average. Overall, it stated that there would be a possible 60,000 additional cases of this form of cancer (as well as other related diseases of the thyroid among thousands of victims) in the three most affected countries and that children under the age of 4 at the time of the accident were particularly susceptible. It documented cases of significant increase of incidence of diseases of the respiratory, digestive, blood vascular, musculo-skeletal systems, abnormalities of the immune system, including a study of 4,000 men in Belarus exposed to small doses of radiation over a long term, as well as congenital infections, genetic abnormalities and premature ageing. The Greenpeace Report commented that the reasons for the discrepancies between the CF Report and its own should be investigated with some urgency and that research into the impact of Chernobyl 20 years on needed to be increased.

How could such discrepancies exist between teams essentially examining the same database? The interesting factor is the wide participation of well-known scientists in the Greenpeace report, and the disavowal of the CF Report by the same scientists, despite its claim to have approval from the governments of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. Science is not monolithic, and in the case of Chernobyl there is no one set of correct and simplistic answers or forecasts. The most significant aspect of the disaster is surely the secrecy surrounding it during the initial, crucial stages. In order to comprehend this situation better, this paper will examine the background to the accident, before explaining how it was interpreted and the initial steps taken both at the national and international levels. It began as a Soviet event that within five years became a national one in Ukraine and Belarus in particular, but the two republics, as well as Russia, approached Chernobyl in very different ways.

The Beginnings

The Soviet nuclear program focused on two main reactor types. Its favored choice was the RBMK or graphite-moderated reactor, which had been diverted from its use in the atomic weapons program from the mid-1950s – hence the predominance in the early accident days of officials from the weapons branch, the so-called Ministry of Medium Machine Building. The RBMK can be refueled online, thus saving valuable time but suffers from numerous defects (over 30 according to Ukrainian KGB reports), two of which might be considered critical: it has a positive void co-efficient, meaning that it becomes unstable if operated at low power, and it has no significant containment above the reactor as, for example, the Canadian graphite reactor, the CANDU. Its prototype was the station at Sosnovyi Bor near the city of St. Petersburg (then called Leningrad). Subsequently, stations were also constructed at Kursk and Chernobyl, with a new generation starting up at Ignalina in Lithuania, and under construction in Smolensk in Western Russia. The alternative reactor, and the one used for export as well as domestic electricity production was the water-pressurized VVER, which can be found across Eastern Europe, as well as in Vietnam, Mongolia, Cuba, and Finland, and for which the Soviet prototype was Novovoronezh.[4]

The site for Chernobyl was chosen in 1970 on the left bank of the Pripyat River, and the first reactor came on line in October 1977. In the building of the first two reactors, partly as a result of the haste of the program and its adoption to a rigid timetable, there were frequent problems. In the year 1978 alone, the time when unit two came into service, 170 workers were injured in accidents at the site.[5] Between 1981 and 1985 there were over 1,000 emergency shutdowns, including 381 at RBMKs, and including over 100 at the Chernobyl station.[6] At the Rivne station, there was no adequate disposal site for low-level nuclear waste, while the containment over the reactor was said to be insufficient to contain the release of radioactive substances in the event of an accident.[7] In general, most of these problems were blamed on the factories manufacturing the equipment. Four reactors, each 1,000 megawatts in size were in service by 1984, with two others at different states of completion: unit 5 (the subject of heightened anxiety in KGB documents and the subject of a famous and alarmist article by the Pripyat journalist Lyubov Kovalevska in *Literaturna* Ukraina on 27 March 1986) was at 80%, and unit 6 at 15%. The reactors were built in twin sets, but units 5 and 6 were some distance from the main station.

On 9 September 1982, a serious accident occurred at Chernobyl's first unit prior to a scheduled shutdown. The exact causes are not known, but one of the reactor channels ruptured when power was raised to 20%. At first the authorities, led by Soyuzatomenergo of the USSR based in Moscow, saw no cause for panic. The accident had been contained and no one had been affected. Within several days, however, the reports became more alarming and it was revealed that significant amounts of radiation had escaped the plant's confines. A top-secret report from the KGB noted that areas had been contaminated at a distance 14 kms northeast of the plant and 5 kms to the southwest. Among the settlements badly af-

fected was Chystohalivka, which was to be one of the villages evacuated immediately after the accident nearly four years later.[8] The documents on this 1982 accident soon fell silent. A Government Commission was appointed to investigate it, but its conclusions – and indeed whether it even met – are not known. Neither the Soviet public nor the international community was informed. By 1982 the USSR, a founding member of the IAEA, had never invited scientists from the organization to inspect Soviet nuclear stations and secrecy was ingrained. The 1982 accident was to set the precedent for behavior and actions after the one in April 1986.

The Chernobyl Accident of 26 April

The intricate details of the accident will not be elaborated here. It is well known that a repeated experiment occurred at the time of shutdown, to see how long a spinning turbine could continue to generate power before emergency turbines came into operation. An inexperienced operator tried to raise the power of the reactor, causing a power surge that blew the roof off the fourth reactor unit at 0123 on 26 April. The resulting radioactive debris reached a height of around one kilometer, and for the next two weeks radiation continued to escape through the gaping hole, with an estimated 260 million curies entering the atmosphere before the hole was plugged on 10 May. The initial explosion released only a few hundred kilograms of particles; the rest of the releases – initially believed to be 3% of the contents of the reactor core – were released over the following days as a result of the graphite fire.[9] The radiation cloud that had been formed was transported by wind in a northwesterly direction so that major fallout occurred on the territory of Belarus, the border of which is only 10 kms from the station. The initial danger was the spread of a graphite fire to the roof of the third reactor unit. The safety test had been conducted by two operators, neither of which was expert in nuclear physics, and altogether 17 shift workers – but not the plant manager or chief engineer – had been present for the test.[10]

Informing both the public and the outside world, however, occurred very slowly. The first announcement came on 28 April on Radio Moscow, but only after workers at the Forsberg nuclear plant in Sweden were detected with high levels of radiation on their shoes before they entered the building. The Swedes thus realized that an accident had occurred somewhere in the USSR. The Politburo set up an operative group under two of Mikhail Gorbachev's associates: Egor Ligachev, his ideology secretary, and Nikolay Ryzhkov, his Prime Minister.[11] These leaders began to set up links with several ministries of key import for a nuclear accident, particularly the Union and republican ministries of health, and the State Committee for Hydrometeorology and Environmental Control. Meanwhile the first more detailed reports appeared in the printed media on 29 April, three days after the disaster occurred, repeating the figure of two dead, but giving no other details. The graphite fire continued to burn, eliciting the arrival of fire crews both from Pripyat and from Kyiv, 137 kms to the south, all of which had to travel via the one, often very narrow, road northward. Helicopters began to drop lead, boron, and sand into the reactor to quash the fire.

Initially an evacuation area had been designated at 10 kms radius around the reactor, meaning that the town for reactor workers Pripyat (population 45,000) and Chernobyl (population 10,000) were the main settlements to be evacuated. Up to that point in the town of Pripyat – especially on 26 and the morning of 27 April – life had continued as normal. Men went fishing and at least two weddings were held outdoors on the 26th. Farmers sometimes burnt their feet on the soil and no health warnings or even the advice to stay indoors were offered to the local residents. A Government Commission was established under Borys Shcherbyna, which took control at the Chernobyl site. On 2 May, Ligachev and Ryzhkov flew to Chernobyl, and promptly expanded the evacuation zone to 30 kms. Some 60,000 people were reportedly evacuated between 2 and 4 May. The early and most serious victims were transported to the specialized Moscow Clinic No. 6, while others were taken to hospitals in Kyiv. By 4 May, it was reported by the Politburo that 1,882 people had been hospitalized, including 204 who were seriously afflicted with radiation sickness.[12] These totals soon increased substantially. On 1 May, over the reactor, radiation levels were reportedly 80 roentgens per hour and in Pripyat, 200 micro-roentgens per hour.[13] Three days later, a change in the direction of the wind led to a dramatic rise in the radiation background in the city of Kyiv (population 2.5 million). By 8 May at the reactor site, levels were still rising, reaching 1,000 roentgens per hour, which was 77,000 times higher than the background norm.[14]

KGB accounts comment on two explosions, the second of which was the most powerful and destroyed all the fire extinguishing equipment. As the radiation cloud formed over the reactor, the lack of Geiger counters rendered it impossible to take accurate readings of radiation levels – raising suspicion of course concerning all reported totals during this period. The KGB's role was to investigate the causes and assign responsibility for the accident but it also concentrated on the need to control traffic in and out of the zone, and on the busy road from Kyiv. All vehicles had to be identified.[15] By late May, the key priority was the construction of a temporary roof – the *Sarkofag* – over the destroyed fourth reactor unit and the construction of a cable pathway for the delivery of building materials. A key concern was that the dropping of materials on the graphite fire had served to push the reactor downward toward the water table. Coal miners were brought in to construct a concrete shelf underneath the reactor, which might otherwise contaminate the Pripyat and linking Dnipro Rivers, as well as the Kyiv Reservoir, the main water supply for the Ukrainian capital. Other priorities were the collection and burial of radioactive deposits – starting with the roof of units 3 and 4 – and the removal of the so-called Red Forest close to the site, which was critically irradiated.[16]

The contaminated zone was divided by the Government Commission based only on one of the radionuclides, Cesium-137, into four zones. The evacuated area was designated as the Zone of Alienation, and projected to remain empty for several decades; a zone of compulsory evacuation was that with between 15 and 40 curies of cesium in the soil; the zone of permanent control with the right to evacuation was that with 5-15 curies; while all territories with more than one curie in the soil had to be constantly monitored. In the

early period, about 118,400 people were evacuated from the zones, but often to areas that fell into the path of the radiation cloud and subsequently had to be evacuated in turn.[17] The zones were inevitably somewhat arbitrary since even a single farmer's field could fall into all four categories depending on where the measurement was made. By 2000, over 350,400 people had been evacuated, with the largest portion moved in the period 1991-2000. About 163,000 were evacuated from Ukraine, 135,000 from Belarus, and 52,400 from Russia.[18]

The Question of Soviet Responsibility

The above events might constitute a "normal" response to a nuclear emergency. However, the Soviet Union was not a normal society and in several respects the Communist Party's reaction to Chernobyl leads to several questions. The cleanup operation, for example, which eventually involved some 600,000 people, was conducted in appalling conditions, with terms in the zone extended without warning, lifetime levels of radiation exceeded at random, overexposure to radiation, especially on the reactor roof,[19] and a lack of facilities that could have been alleviated with a better response to offers of assistance from abroad. Geiger counters simply did not work beyond a level of 25 rems but workers remained in the zone long after this scale was reached. Initially, volunteers from all parts of the Soviet Union carried out the main cleanup operation, and remained in the zone for the first month. When military reservists took over, the volunteers simply "disappeared" and did not appear on any monitoring list of victims. That many subsequently died seems a foregone conclusion – after all they were in the zone at the very height of the tragedy – but in most cases there was no follow-up investigation. The Ukrainian film director Volodymyr Shevchenko was one of the early victims after filming in the area during the first days. Health data in any case were classified, and once the reservists arrived, the USSR Ministry of Defense controlled all access to information. When deaths occurred they were attributed to manufactured illnesses like "vegeto-vascular dystonia." No mortalities that occurred during this period were attributed to Chernobyl.[20]

By the spring of 1989, partly as a result of the progress of "Glasnost,"' maps appeared in the Soviet media indicating that the area of radiation fallout was much broader than first reported. Hundreds of Soviet families suddenly discovered that they were living in a radioactive zone, particularly in Belarus.[21] The reaction can be imagined and it led to demands for further – and much more controversial – evacuations. However, essentially the damage had been done, as radioactive food had been consumed, delivered locally and at distance, and even exported for the previous three years. This combination of secrecy and distortions, at a time when the Politburo knew all the details about the impact of the disaster but chose not to disclose them, has been termed by Alla Yaroshinskaya, former Soviet deputy and aide to Boris Yeltsin, as "the big lie." She was to rescue many of these documents for posterity in late 1991.[22] Even the acclaimed Soviet report to the IAEA in Vienna in August 1986 about the causes of the accident went no further than to cite human error, ignoring the well-known defects in the RBMK reactor. In fact, the isolation of all decision-making

for the nuclear industry in Moscow, and Gorbachev's decision to use Chernobyl as a form of state propaganda for his anti-nuclear weapons program, had led to paralysis in Kyiv and Minsk. In turn by the late 1980s the USSR faced a financial and political crisis that undermined its efforts to deal adequately with the aftermath of Chernobyl.

In addition to Soviet culpability for many of the problems that arose, one should recall that journalists began to speculate wildly about the real consequences, and one documentary film purported to show genetic abnormalities caused by a rise in background and soil irradiation among livestock as early as 1988.[23] No doubt "radio-phobia" led to many uncorroborated reports, and stories such as the application of red wine and vodka as a cure for radiation sickness. In turn, however, such beliefs were a result of official silence and lack of information from the authorities. There were very few political scapegoats: the Minister for Medium Machine Building was dismissed; 67 plant workers were fired or demoted, along with 27 members of the local Communist Party organizations; in the summer of 1987 the plant director, Viktor Bryukhanov, along with his chief engineer and two operators were put on trial in the town of Chernobyl (including the deputy chief engineer who had supervised the experiment). Bryukhanov received a sentence of ten years of hard labor, a particularly harsh punishment given his powerless role as plant manager and absence during the major events.[24] Glasnost' also spawned political opposition in Ukraine, most notable the nascent environmental movement, Zelenyi Svit, led by medical doctor Yurii Shcherbak, initially formed in late 1987. By early 1989, Ukraine had its own Popular Movement for Perestroika (its founding congress was held in September of that year), influenced in part by secrecy over the effects of Chernobyl, and led by three members of the Union of Writers: Dmytro Pavlychko, Ivan Drach, and Volodymyr Yavorivsky. Rukh soon began to demand an end to the nuclear power program in Ukraine, as well as Ukrainian sovereignty over its industrial installations and economy (achieved in the summer of 1990).[25]

Chernobyl devastated Ukraine and Belarus, contaminating respectively 8 and 22% of the land masse,[26] 25% of the forests in Belarus, and also polluted a very large area of Russia, including Smolensk and Bryansk oblasts. More than 5 million people currently reside in areas with more than one curie per square km of Cesium in the soil. In Ukraine, the long-term impact of Cesium, Strontium, and Plutonium (half-life of 24,000 years) will continue in perpetuity in Kyiv, Zhytomyr, and Chernihiv regions, as well as parts of Volyn and Rivne oblasts. In Belarus, the most affected regions of Homel, Mahileu, and Brest. Many of the villages of Homel region have been depopulated; others subsist in abject poverty but virtually no young people remain. During harvesting, university students are dispatched here to assist as an obligatory part of their curriculum. Though the fourth reactor unit was covered by the fall of 1986 – the so-called Shelter – it began to erode after 15 years and initially a German-French consortium designed a new roof of more permanent construction (the Shelter Implementation Plan).[27] Later a rival bid emerged from a US-Ukrainian consortium. The structure was in danger of a partial collapse, particularly as the heavy reactor cap that was flung off by the explosion overhangs the reactor. The environmental movement that was inspired by Chernobyl led to an anti-nuclear backlash across the Soviet Union and

the abandonment of various half-completed projects, including reactors at sites in Chyhyryn and the Crimea. In 1990, the Ukrainian government introduced a 5-year moratorium on commissioning of new reactors. Belarus belatedly imposed a 10-year moratorium in 1998.[28]

The Health Effects Question

The casualty levels from Chernobyl may never be accurately known. The figure of less than 50 dead (or earlier 31 dead) is clearly understated. A so-called Chernobyl AIDS has reduced immunity and resistance to disease in the contaminated zone, where morbidity rates have risen significantly over the past 20 years. The number of healthy children— reported as 80% in the mid-1980s, in the zones later affected by radiation fallout—was less than 20% by the early 21st century, and considerably lower than in clean zones. In Belarus, as a result of Chernobyl, 1.5 million people came under medical observation by this same time, over 15% of the population, including over 330,000 children.[29] Liquidators have suffered a variety of ailments. Many committed suicide. At least 5,000 were dead by 1990, and at least two sources have cited over 10,000 within five years of the accident.[30] The difficulty here is corroborating the results. A central register is lacking and as noted there is a plethora of often conflicting medical studies and an incomplete source base. What is plain is that liquidators, evacuees, and current zone residents face a variety of health problems that have resulted from Chernobyl, a fall in living standards, lack of nutrition, as well as the sort of psychological stress cited in the Chernobyl Forum Report. Overall, the number of people declared to be suffering from the Chernobyl accident in the territories of the former Soviet Union in December 2000 was 7.1 million. Of this figure, 4.5 million were living in contaminated regions, 566,402 were liquidators on the scene in 1988-89, with a further 292,244 in 1986-87, 350,400 were evacuees, and 148,274 had been designated as "invalids." Breaking down these figures between the republics, the number of victims in Ukraine was 3.18 million, with 2.09 million in Russia, and 1.82 million (easily the highest proportion) in Belarus.[31]

Thyroid gland cancer began to surface among children—it was practically unknown in that age-group hitherto—from 1989, a result of the release of radioactive Iodine-131, with a half-life of 8 days. In Belarus, 19 deaths were reported among those on whom surgery was performed.[32] The levels of leukemia rose throughout the contaminated zone after the accident though they were within the European norms. However, the onset of new diseases, such as childhood diabetes, is often attributed by local doctors to the rise in radiation levels or radiation in the food chain. The impact of low-level radiation is a matter for sustained debate. In Belarus, Dr. Yuri Bandazhevsky, a nuclear specialist and the former Rector of Homel' Medical Institute, carried out a study of the incidence of cardio-vascular sickness among children in Homel' oblast. It concluded that relatively low subjection to Cesium-137 could cause cataracts, heart disease, and other maladies. He was also critical of sale of radioactive vegetables and maintained that the contaminated region around Cher-

nobyl was increasing over time. In July 1999 he was jailed by the Lukashenka regime under anti-terrorism laws, and subjected to a further sentence in 2001 for an alleged bribery case at his institute, and released only on 5 August 2005, with his health broken.[33]

The serious health dilemmas that have resulted from Chernobyl led local scientists to question figures from the IAEA-led team. According to scientist Aleksandr Yablokov, the number of thyroid gland cancer cases among children, for example, was over 10,000 rather than the 4,000 cited in the Chernobyl Report, which has implications for the long-term mortality rate.[34] Though the Report had acknowledged a significant rise in various types of cancer among liquidators and of breast cancer among women living in the zone, it contained nothing about the apparent lack of immunity to diseases among the population generally categorized as Chernobyl victims. There was, however, information about an apparent link between radiation and the increase of newborn children with abnormalities and with Downs Syndrome. The serious critique of the Report by Yablokov took issue with a number of the Forum's conclusions. He noted, for example, that the Report had declared that the total number of deaths resulting from Chernobyl will never be known exactly and yet proceeded to state, with absolute precision, that an additional 4,726 additional deaths were expected in Russia. He believed it was incorrect to state that the rise in mortality cannot be attributed to Chernobyl since it had occurred in all areas of the former USSR. While true, the first significant rise occurred after 1986 and the Chernobyl explosion could well have been the key factor. In additional, the most significant rise in mortality levels occurred in the Chernobyl-affected regions. Perhaps above all, Yablokov objected to the nebulous language of the Report, with the frequent use of phrases like "not altogether clearly," "it is possible," "not definitively," and "not corroborated by statistical data," that are deployed essentially to conceal statistically credible data. He cited studies that indicate direct links between radiation and increased stress and the fact that the Report ignored the impact of Chernobyl outside the three major countries of concern: Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia.[35] He might have added also the fact that the Report takes no account of the intricacies of the Soviet system, which had already successfully concealed past disaster such as the Kyshtym tragedy of 1957, as well as other accidents of significance.

The Disaster in Transition

In 2000, the Ukrainian government of Leonid D. Kuchma closed the Chernobyl station permanently, in the hope that the output of the two remaining reactors could be offset by the commissioning, with Western aid, of two new reactors at the Khmelnytsky and Rivne stations (both VVER-1000s). There are over 100 radioactive waste burial sites in the zone, many of which cannot be described as safe or permanent. As described by Mary Mycio, the zone has effectively become depopulated and a virtual wildlife park, but scientists are now in dispute over the impact of the disaster on wildlife.[36] After nearly 25 years there is no consensus on health effects of the accident and the "rift" between the scientific establishment represented by the IAEA and the popular media has not been healed. It is one of the

most unfortunate elements of the disaster because it hinders an open discussion. As noted, the accident had a profound impact on Ukrainian national development and in raising national consciousness and concomitant anti-Moscow sentiment. According to a 2005 survey by the Razumkov Centre in Kyiv, Chernobyl was not the main issue preoccupying residents of Ukraine—the main issues of concern were low income, unemployment, and crime—but nevertheless it ranked fourth, and was of special concern to those over 40 who could best recall the accident. According to the same poll, over 64.6% believed nuclear power to be a dangerous or very dangerous form of energy production. Almost 55% of respondents opposed a proposed new expansion of Ukraine's nuclear program, which had become increasing possibility because of the gas war with Russia, and 26.8% were in favor. Only 7.4% displayed trust in the government concerning nuclear safety, and over 40% preferred that a decision on building new reactors in Ukraine be subjected to a national referendum.[37]

In Belarus, Chernobyl has been identified primarily with the platforms of the political opposition. In April 2006, the Chernobyl March, a traditional event that draws large crowds in Minsk, followed angry protests at the manipulation of the presidential elections. Independent studies of the disaster have been stifled, it is virtually impossible for non-government organizations to hold conferences and meetings on the effects of Chernobyl, and in 2008, the president cancelled visas for children traveling to European countries for periods of recuperation.[38] The government revamped the entire program for summer trips by Belarusian children abroad when a girl visiting California, Tanya Kazyra reportedly refused to return home with other children in August 2008. Her date of birth was cited as 1991.[39] Although she eventually returned to Belarus, the Belarusian authorities justifiably wanted assurances that the incident would not be repeated. The Belarusian government has taken credit for all recuperation programs introduced since 1990, but has consistently advocated the cultivation of contaminated land, and families living in the Chernobyl-affected regions have lived off the land for the past 23 years. In the 1990s, a health crisis developed in Belarus, which elicited the convocation of the First Congress of Doctors in 1998. The Congress speakers cited a rise in the incidence of sickness by 32% between 1990 and 1997, and a 50-fold increase in the number of children with thyroid gland cancer.[40]

Today, the legacy of Chernobyl lives on in Ukraine and Belarus in particular. Newly independent states succeeded the Soviet republics but faced overwhelming economic problems. Whereas Ukraine was left to overcome a disaster, the costs of which were estimated at US$128 billion by the year 2000,[41] Belarus under Lukashenka, facing even higher costs, opted to maintain that the major problems caused by Chernobyl had been overcome. Ukraine has continued to rely on nuclear energy for its power needs, and its 15 reactors produced 47.5% of the country's electricity in 2007.[42] By the summer of 2009, Russia had agreed to finance Belarus' first nuclear power plant, which is to be constructed in the Hrodna region.[43] There is considerable opposition within the country to this venture. Twenty-three years on, over 10,000 young people have suffered from thyroid gland cancer; and thousands of liquidators have died prematurely. The populations of the two republics, like those of Russia, are in steep decline. Belarus has "lost" over half a million population

since 1985, Ukraine over 5 million. The lack of fertility among these populations and mass migrations from contaminated regions, are both linked directly to the Chernobyl disaster. The world has moved on to new crises: war in Iraq, famine in Africa, the danger of nuclear weapons being manufactured in North Korea and Iran. And yet there is no closure on Chernobyl, no foreseeable end to the debate, and little relief from the profound medical, social, and psychological burden placed on the millions living with its effects in the soil and in the food chain today, and perhaps exemplified by the gloomy and impoverished villages of Belarus's Homel' region, as well as by the empty Ukrainian city of Pripyat, now overgrown and with its once bright apartment now empty, their contents ransacked by thieves, extracting the last vestiges of the former lives of the residents.

Notes

1 Among the best-known works in a trade or popular format are the following: Zhores A. Medvedev, *The Legacy of Chernobyl* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990); Yurii Shcherbak, *Chernobyl: A Documentary Story* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988); V.S. Gubarev, et al, *Yadernyi sled* (Moscow: Energoatomizdat, 1990); V.Vorona, et al, *Sotsial'ni naslidky Chernobyl's'koi katastrofy* (Kharkiv: Folio, 1996); David R. Marples, *The Social Impact of the Chernobyl Disaster* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988); and Adriana Petryna, *Life Exposed: Biological Citizens after Chernobyl* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2002).

2 World Health Organization, *Health Effects of the Chernobyl Accident and Special Care Programmes. Report of the UN Chernobyl Forum Expert Group "Health"*. Working draft, August 31, 2005.

3 Selected information was released in a press release. See, for example, «Chernobyl 'likely to kill 4,000',» BBC News Report, 5 September 2005.

4 Outlines of the development of nuclear power in the USSR can be found in Paul R. Josephson, *Red Atom: Russia's Nuclear Power Program from Stalin to Today* (New York: W.H. Freeman & Company, 2000), pp. 203-242; and David R. Marples, *Chernobyl & Nuclear Power in the USSR* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), pp. 71-93.

5 «Dopovidna zapyska KDB URSR do TsK KPU pro systematychni porushennya tekhnolohii provadzhennya budivel'no-montazhnykh robit na okremykh dilyankakh budivnytstva Chernobyl's'koi AES.» 17 January 1979. DA SBU, F.16, Op. 7 (1985), Spr. 42, Ark. 247-248.

6 Josephson, p. 260.

7 «Proekt dopovidnoi zapysky KDB URSR do TsK KPU pro osnovni nedoliky proektuvannya, budivnytstva ta ekspluatatsii ob'ektiv atomnoi enerhetyky respubliky,» December 1986. DA SBU, F.65, Spr. 1, T.25, Ark. 309-312.

8 «Dopovidna zapyska holovy KDB URSR pershomu sekretaryu TsK KPU pro radiatsiinu obstanovku, shcho skalasya v raioni roztashuvannya Chernobyl's'koi AES, vnaslidok avarii 9 veresnya 1982 r.,» 5 November 1982. DA SBU, F.65, Spr. 1, T.5, Ark. 243-245.

9 V. Bar'yakhtar, V. Poyarkov, V. Kholosha, and N. Shteinberg, «The Accident: Chronology, Causes, and Releases,» in George G. Vargo, ed., *The Chernobyl Accident: A Comprehensive Risk Assessment* (Columbus, Ohio: Battelle Press, 2000, p. 21.

[10] «Povidomlennya UKDB URSR po m. Kyevu ta Kyivs'kii oblasti do KDB SRSR ta KDB URSR pro vybukh 4-ho enerhobloka Chernobyl's'koi AES,» 26 April 1986. DA SBU, F.65, Spr. 1, T.34, Ark. 2-3.

[11] «Protokol Operativnoy gruppy Politbyuro TsK KPSS po voprosam svyazannym s likvidatsiey posledstviy avarii na Chernobyl'skoy AES,» 29 April 1986, in Alla Yaroshinskaya, *Chernobyl': sovershenno sekretno* (Moscow: Drugie berega, 1992), pp. 250-252.

[12] «Protokol No. 5; zasedaniya Operativnoy gruppy Politbyuro TsK KPSS po voprosam, svyazannym s likvodatsiey posledstviy avarii na Chernobyl'skoy AES,» 4 May 1986, in Yaroshinskaya, p. 264.

[13] «Povidomlennya Operhrup KDB SRSR ta KDB URSR pro khid robit z likvidatsii naslidkiv avarii na Chernobyl's'kii AES,» 1 May 1986, DA SBU, F.65, Spr. 1, T.33, Ark. 23-27.

[14] «Povidomlennya 6-ho Upravlinnya KDB URSR do KDB SRSR pro radiatsiinu obstanovku ta khid robit z likvidatsii naslidkiv avarii na Chernobyl's'kii AES,» 9 May 1986, DA SBU, F.65, Spr. 1, T.33, Ark. 71-74.

[15] «Spetsial'ne povidomlennya nachal'nika OH KDB URSR u m. Chernobyli holovi KDB URSR,» 11 May 2986, DA SBU, F.65, Spr. 1, T.33, Ark. 208-211.

[16] «Povidomlennya OH KDB URSR ta KDB SRSR u m. Chernobyli do KDB SRSR pro radiatsiinu obstanovku ta khid rozsliduvannya avarii na Chernobyl's'kii AES,» 19 May 1986, DA SBU, F.65, Spr. 1, T.33, Ark. 144-146.

[17] See Marples (1988), p. 31.

[18] United Nations, *Gumanitarnye posledstviya avarii na Chernobyl'skoy AES: Strategiya reabilitatsii* (Minsk: Yunipak, 2002, p. 66.

[19] For example, on 1 June 1986, USSR Ministry of Health officials expressed their serious concern about radiation safety for those who worked on the station's territory. Measurements indicated that the content of plutonium isotopes exceeded the maximum permissible by up to 1,000 times. The levels necessitated the use of gas masks, but the responsible ministries (Defense, Energy, the Coal Industry, and others) had not provided personnel with protective equipment. See «Povidomlennya OH KDB URSR ta KDB SRSR u m. Chernobyli do KDB SRSR pro radiatsiinu obstanovku ta khid robit z likvidatsii naslidkiv avarii na Chernobyl's'kii AES,» 1 June 1986, DA SBU, F.65, Spr. 1, T.33, Ark. 196-198.

[20] See, for example, Lyubov Kovalevska's account of the death of military reservist Leonid Ignatev from Moscow (born 1967), whose mother discovered by chance that he had been called up for service at Chernobyl in late April 1986 during a periodic visit home. By July 1987, his hair and teeth had begun to fall out. When he died on 27 July 1988, the initial diagnosis was radiation sickness. Later it was claimed that he had died from a little known poison and the USSR Ministry of Defense denied that he had ever been at Chernobyl. *Literaturna Ukraina*, 10 August 1989.

[21] The first high-level acknowledgement that radiation had spread well beyond the 30-km zone in Ukraine was an article and map that appeared in the newspaper *Radyans'ka Ukraina* on 1 March 1989. It also provided the first public account of the division of the contaminated region into four zones, as cited above.

[22] Alla Yaroshinskaya, «The Big Lie: Chernobyl 20 Years On,» paper presented for the 2006 Stasiuk-Cambridge Annual Lecture, Robinson College, University of Cambridge, UK, 24 February 2006.

[23] I am referring to the film «Mi-kro-fon!» produced in Kyiv in 1988.

24 It was reported that Bryukhanov had lied about the radiation levels at the Chernobyl plant immediately after the accident, providing totals that were dozens of times lower than the reality, thereby endangering the lives of plant workers. *Moscow News*, No. 32, 9 August 1987, p. 12.

25 I described these events in David R. Marples, *Ukraine under Perestroika: Ecology, Economics, and the Workers' Revolt* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), Chapters 4 and 5. See also Jane I. Dawson, *Eco-nationalism, Anti-nuclear Activism, and national Identity in Russia, Lithuania, and Ukraine* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).

26 The statement refers to contamination by the longer-living radionuclides, Cesium-137 and Strontium-90. About 90% of Belarus was contaminated with Iodine-131, which has a half-life of eight days.

27 A detailed account of the history of the Shelter and the Shelter Implementation Plan is available on the web page of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA): www.iaea.org.

28 See, for example, Aleksandr Nikolaychuk, «Osoboe mnenie,» *BDG Delovaya gazeta*, 31 January 2006, p. 5.

29 Vladimir Tsalko, «Zhizn' posle Chernobylya: tsel' – preodolenie,» *Belaruskaya dumka*, No. 4 (2005): 108.

30 See, for example, http://au.news.yahoo.com/050906/19/p/vtlm.html. The Chernobyl Union of liquidators in Ukraine has cited the same total.

31 United Nations, p. 32.

32 Yu. E. Demidchik, Z.E. Gedrevich, Z.E., and M.N. Shepet'ko. "Vnedrenie nauchnykh razrabotok v klinicheskuyu praktiku," in V.E. Shevchuk, V.L., Gurachevskiy, and V.V. Kolbanov, ed. *17 let posle Chernobylya: problemy i resheniya: Sbornik nauchnykh trudov.* Minsk, 2003, p. 23.

33 http://www.amnestyusa.org/action/special/bandazhevsky.html

34 Aleksey Yablokov, "Snova o Chernobyle: Pravda, polupravda, i lozh," *Narodnaya Volya*, 4 January 2006, p. 5.

35 Yablokov, p. 5.

36 Mary Mycio, *Wormwood Forest: a Natural History of Chernobyl* (Washington, D.C.: Joseph Henry Press, 2005, especially Chapters 4 and 5. See also Sanjida O'Connell, "The Mystery of Chernobyl," *Daily Telegraph*, 31 August 2009.

37 Volodymyr Saprykin, «Vlada i suspil'stvo: nalahodzhennya spivrobitnytstva dlya bezpechnoho rozvytku yadernoi enerhetyky Ukrainy,» *Dzerzhalo tyzhnya*, 25 June-1 July 2005, available on-line at: http://www.zn.kiev.ua/nn/show/552/50432/.

38 See, for example, http://www.radionetherlands.nl/news/international/5937395/Lukashenko-withdraws-visas-for-Chernobyl-children, 27 August 2008 (accessed on 2 September 2009).

39 RIA Novosti, 6 August 2008.

40 David R. Marples. "The Demographic Crisis in Belarus." *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (January-February 2000): 16-27.

41 V. Kholosha and V. Poyarkov, "Economy: Chernobyl Accident Losses," in Vargo, p. 220.

42 http://www.world-nuclear.org/info/inf46.html, June 2009 (accessed on 2 September 2009).

43 *ITAR-TASS*, 27 August 2009.

Astrid Sahm

THE CHERNOBYL CATASTROPHE IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN CULTURE OF REMEMBRANCE

Updated version of a lecture presented at the University of Gießen (Germany) on the 15th of December 2009

2011 marks the 25th anniversary of the reactor explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. Thus, an entire generation was born which has no memories directly connected with the events that happened on 26th of April 1986. In this regard the danger emerges that the 25th anniversary might be the last occasion when the mass media turn their attention to the Chernobyl catastrophe and its consequences, along with a flow of publications, films, exhibitions etc., before final Chernobyl is finally buried in oblivion.

At the same time, the reactor explosion at the nuclear power plant of Chernobyl on 26th April 1986 affected almost all peoples in Europe and beyond. In many people, Chernobyl caused "an anthropological shock"[1], which mad evident to them the omnipresent threat to human life posed by modern technology. Thus, the majority of people in Europe who consciously survived the reactor explosion still remember about what they were doing when the disaster was reported. In subsequent years initiative groups have been established in almost all European countries. Until now these groups render assistance to people in Belarus, Ukraine, in a less degree in Russia to mitigate the consequences of catastrophe. That is why, at first, the Chernobyl catastrophe seems to be destined to become an essential part of the European culture of remembrance.

To determine whether the Chernobyl catastrophe can make a contribution to the formation of the European culture of remembrance we should focus on two main questions:

1. What is the European culture of remembrance?
2. How was the Chernobyl catastrophe perceived and what are the memories of its consequences?

To answer these questions firstly public mass media were analyzed as well as the policy of remembrances by political and social actors. Unfortunately this article cannot address the remembrances in the private sphere (in family, etc.). These forms of remembrances require a separate research.

What is European culture of remembrance?

In recent years, a number of European politicians and social actors made statements about the development of European culture of remembrance. This is associated with expectations that common remembrances of past events will strengthen the foundation of the European Union as a political project.

From the perspective of content attempts to develop the European culture of remembrance focus on the events of the Second World War and especially on the extermination of European Jews. Therefore, the Holocaust is often denoted as negative fundamental myth of Europe[2]. Already at this point one can see an important complication arising during the formation of the European culture of remembrance, which not only aimed at the creation of transnational view on history but also requires a definite change of paradigms in reflection of historical events and contexts. Traditionally, national identity before and partly after 1945 was based on the perception of national acts of heroism and heroic events in national history. By contrast, common remembrance in Europe extends beyond national borders mainly in the remembrances about pan-Europe catastrophes of the XX century and their victims[3]. On the one hand, this first of all makes possible, the further coexistence of various national historical narratives. However, on the other hand, the question arises as to whether the remembrances of the Holocaust are enough to develop a strong sense of interrelation and common historical meaning in Europe. Certainly, the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall and the Iron Curtain expanded the base for the European culture of remembrance in a positive dimension. Besides there are also other events important to the whole European continent which can be integrated into the European culture of remembrance and partially make it possible to refer to a heritage in the spirit of freedom and emancipation. This refers to 1789 (French revolution), 1848 (Democratic revolution), 1914 (First World War) and 1968 (students' unrest). As a rule these events are widely celebrated by public only on the big anniversaries while the Holocaust remembrance is always present.

Common transnational remembrance still bears conflict potential. Moreover, ceremonies and the public debate devoted to the 60th anniversary of the beginning of the Second World War and the 20th anniversary of the velvet revolutions in the countries of the former socialist camp in 2009, have shown to what extent the remembrances about these events in the countries of Europe were heterogeneous and conflicting in European countries. Thus, dividing lines between East and the West still manifest themselves until now - which is not surprising due to the various political and social contexts which have influenced or still influence the formation of remembrance of people in the East and the

West. At the same time, further differentiation is possible, as Stefan Troebst tries to do by defining Western, Central Western, Central-East and Eastern Europe as four zones with specific cultures of remembrance. In addition, he singles out the dictatorial experience of Southern Europe lasting up to the 1970s[4].

Key lines of conflicts include the assessment of Stalin's repressions and the issue of its relation to the national-socialist mass extermination.

On the one hand, the dividing lines are drawn between old and new members of the EU. In Western countries due to the dominating thesis about the singularity of the Holocaust, critical conceptualization of the Stalinist repressions, as a rule, was either forced out or used to minimise the scale of national socialist policy of mass extermination. However, in contrast to people in Western Europe who - including the Federal Republic of Germany since 1985 – consider the year 1945 as the year of liberation, to people in Central European countries, it means a transition from one dictatorship to another[5].

For example, those differences became evident in 2007 when the relocation of a Soviet monument in Tallinn resulted in a real international conflict between Estonia and Russia, and the EU in general took a demonstrative neutral position. Nevertheless there are significant distinctions between Russia and the EU countries. While in the EU countries the culture of remembrance is primarily based on victims, in Russia and Belarus first of all the heroic aspects of the victory are emphasized. The conflict potential manifested itself especially clearly in the discussion of the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact. The fact that this anniversary attracted much more public attention in the West, than the Munich agreement of 1938 a year before, was considered by Russia as an affront, which was, for example, articulated in the open letter of Russian Prime-Minister Putin in September 2009. These comparisons show that historical discourse there are still moments of recriminations connected with the questions of historical responsibility[6].

The second key line of conflicts is the perception of 1989 as year of freedom which resulted in the final overcoming of the system of block-driven confrontation and the breakup of the socialist camp. Likewise, in this case the asymmetry in the historical experience and remembrances can be observed. The year 1991 became a crucial caesura for Russia, Belarus and other CIS countries. The disintegration of the Soviet Union has been perceived as the catastrophe connected with the loss of the status of the world power and economic decline in the CIS countries. This made the positive experience of expanded freedom recede into the background.

Considering the existence of such conflicting cultures of remembrance many sceptics make the assumption that a common European culture of remembrance is impossible in long-term prospect and remembrances will be connected with the national context in the future. The debates about the preamble to the EU Constitutional Treaty seem to confirm this assumption. The final version of the draft of the Constitutional Treaty does not mention explicitly such historical turning points as the world wars, the Holocaust or the Gulag, and has only a vague note about the «now united Europe after such a painful experience.

The Lisbon Treaty which has come into force at the beginning of 2010 does not even mention this[7].

Nevertheless, sceptics have ignored not only the fact that national events within the national context are also interpreted in very different and contradicting ways. First of all, they have not considered that the concept of common culture of remembrance is general aimed at the culture of joint handling of various memories rather than at common memories. According to the definition of the historian Hans Günter Hockerts, «the culture of remembrance" represents "the broad general concept denoting all the forms of not purely scientific use of historic events by the public" [8].

To ensure that this way of "use" does not result in acute conflicts the culture of remembrance should include an ability to understand the various perspectives when considering historical events from the viewpoints of various participant´s different contexts without a contraposition of these perspectives. Thus, instead of a black-and-white picture there is a picture with various grey tones, which on the one hand reveals objective impact of political systems, and on the other hand makes evident challenges and opportunities of individual choice in extraordinary historical situations. Corresponding processes of a more differentiated perception of history could be observed at the national level of the majority of West European states after 1990.

In fact, this was a time of a critical rethinking of history, thanks to which cases of collaborationist activity and participation in National Socialist policy of deportation and extermination of Jews were admitted for the first time. Therefore the «black-and-white tone», which created «a picture of nation united by the uprising against external and internal enemies» has been broken[9]. This fact facilitates compatibility of national and European cultures of remembrance, i.e. the development of «European-style opened national cultures»[10].

In this case, the culture of remembrance primarily means learning lessons from history to avoid crimes against humanity in the present and in the future rather than condemnation of historical actors at that time. In this respect the concept of culture of remembrance is closely connected with the concept of political culture. The common culture of remembrance can exist only if the participants share common democratic values which admit the pluralism of remembrances and give the opportunity to correlate these remembrances to appropriate contexts. Therefore, such culture of remembrance is closely linked with the existence of functioning democratic governance structures.

According to Konrad Jarusch, a common culture of remembrance can be formed only out of a variety of decentralised initiatives, understanding of the past as commitment to learn to preserve the peace and human rights in the framework of civilization rather than progress[11]. Taking into account the fact of existence of various authoritarian and hybrid political systems in Europe, the crucial question in this case is whether the common European culture of remembrance assumes the existence of a common political culture as something in place or the development of a common culture of remembrance to a certain extent contributes to the formation of a common political culture. The second assumption,

in my opinion, relating to dialectic understanding of the interrelationship between political culture and the culture of remembrance, is more appropriate.

Due to the conflict potential which is connected with the Second World War and the Holocaust, the following question arises: what historical events except abovementioned can contribute to the formation of the European culture of remembrance? To verify if the theme of Chernobyl catastrophe can be appropriate for this purpose we should ask the question as to how this catastrophe is part of memories in different countries, and what various conditions and prerequisites for remembrance exist in countries and among them. This will enable us to identify conflict potential which might complicate or make impossible the inclusion of the Chernobyl catastrophe in the European culture of remembrance.

Perception of Chernobyl catastrophe in the East and in the West

When the reactor exploded at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, the system of the international relations had been still divided into Western and East blocks. In the USSR the policy of publicity and perestroika had just been proclaimed by General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev and the catastrophe accurately outlined its limits. Only after the detection of the increase in background radiation in the Scandinavian countries the Soviet government admitted the fact of an "accident" at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. In the following weeks, people in Western Europe learnt that in fact the reactor had exploded and the worst ever design-related accident had occurred. In the Soviet Union some three years passed before people learnt about the actual scale of the catastrophe and newspapers published maps of the affected areas[12].

The reactions relating to this fact were different in different countries. In the Federal Republic of Germany with its strong antinuclear movement the catastrophe was perceived as the confirmation of long-standing concerns. Canned food was sold out, crops were eliminated, sandboxes were dug over, and children were forbidden to walk on the street to reduce radiation exposure. Just in 1986 sociologist Ulrich Beck published his book on risk society. He considered Chernobyl as «the end of all our high-precision opportunities to distance ourselves»: «On the one hand there were fences, camps, military blocks, on the other hand – our own four walls - real and symbolic borders beyond which those who seemed not to be affected could remain neutral. All this still exists, but after Chernobyl it ceases to exist". [13]

Although the public response to Chernobyl catastrophe in Germany was probably the strongest and radioactive fall out seemed to have stopped on the border with France, Chernobyl caused public concern in other West European countries as well and necessitated national measures. For example, hundreds tons of meat of a reindeer were exterminated in Sweden, sheep slaughtering was forbidden on several hundreds farms of England Wales and Scotland during 15 years after Chernobyl[14]. However, over all, Chernobyl caused insignificant and short-term damage to every-day life in Western Europe.

By contrast, in the Soviet Union people did not have a notion about the risks of the use of "peace atom». Some 100 thousand people which were evacuated during the first days and weeks after the catastrophe had no idea that they had to leave their houses for ever and hundreds thousands people would share the same destiny in the years to come. They thought that the evacuation would last some days and they left all their property including domestic animals. Many people associated these evacuations organized by military soldiers in a short term with the escape after the attack of Germany on the Soviet Union in the summer 1941. In subsequent years the "heroic" struggle of disaster fighters (liquidators) was compared with the war, the scale of the catastrophe was compared with the war victims: every fourth inhabitant of Belarus suffered from the disaster like during the war years. Even the left villages in which wooden houses burnt down reminded the Second World War. After that there were only stone chimneys which is associated with well-known memorial complex Khatyn constructed in memory of villages destroyed during the Second World War[15].

While in Western Europe the Chernobyl catastrophe was perceived as a disaster of a new type which concerns the future global risks of a modern technological society, in the Soviet Union it was interpreted as a local accident with easy-to-overcome consequences. This has been masterly shown by Svetlana Aleksievich in her book «The Chernobyl prayer. The chronicle of the future» in which the witnesses interviewed by her caught in this catastrophe something especial but they were at a loss for a word and described the reality through comparisons with war[16]. When the first open meetings between Germans and Belarusians were conducted in the framework of so-called «public diplomacy» in 1988 and 1989 Belarusians could not understand why Germany had been taken more precautionary measures than their own country, which had suffered several times more from high radioactive pollution. Moreover, people in Germany and Western European countries had much more opportunities to act on one's own: they could buy dosimeter, and there were independent institutes such as the Ecological Institute in Darmstadt.

In spite of the distinct differences between the West and the East in the perception of Chernobyl catastrophe during their meetings people found out that the catastrophe has caused the same fears and anxiety concerning health of children etc. The Chernobyl catastrophe had caused special fears of mothers and women. For that reason initiative groups were created in different countries in order to contribute to the reduction of the consequences of the catastrophe in Belarus and Ukraine. This movement was especially manifested in Germany where the assistance often motivated by an aspiration to expiate in practice German fault for the crimes committed during the Second World War. The widespread comparisons in Belarus of the catastrophe with the war contributed to that[17].

These initiatives invited children for health improvement, organised assistance and rendering of medical services, supported resettlements, offered opportunities of rehabilitation in the affected countries and did many more things. In 1995 the amount of the humanitarian aid delivered to Belarus was estimated at 700 million dollars, however, in 2005 it was worth some 75 million dollars. The aid came from 101 countries. Additionally, about

50 thousand children have been invited for health improvement abroad every year: about 10 thousand of them - to Germany, and more than 20 thousand children-to Italy[18]. This wide movement of assistance could not exist without conflicts which are classically connected with the scheme "donor – recipient". Thus, the question arose whether the vacation abroad is in effect rehabilitation with a beneficial health effect or it is in a greater degree connected with a cultural shock. This question provoked disputes between the initiatives. In this context, some initiatives deliberately selected the path which forced on offering rehabilitation opportunities, as well as on other structural projects in the affected countries. Since the 1990s, many initiatives have managed to become real partner initiatives which developed and implemented projects on equal term. However it is necessary to investigate whether the question about the assessment of the catastrophe consequences is still the central focus of the dialogue between various initiatives or whether Chernobyl has turned out to be a rather formal starting point for joint projects.

In addition to the categories of the past and the present for perception of Chernobyl it is important to answer the question whether it is a disaster due to the Soviet system or should it seen as a global disaster which could happen at any nuclear plant regardless of political structure. As the Soviet management of the Chernobyl catastrophe with its three-year policy of silence has deeply undermined the trust of the Soviet citizens to the existing political system, the new alternative political forces formed in the Soviet Union, used this catastrophe to discredit the dominating Soviet system. In Belarus and Ukraine national forces initiated even something like the "Nuremberg Trial" by organising "public tribunals" in Minsk and Kiev in April 1991[19]. Thus they remained within the framework of the dominant public discourse which explained the Chernobyl catastrophe in the categories of the Second World War or they tried to use it to attain their goals.

In contrast, in Western Europe it was clear to most of the public that in case of the catastrophic design accident the catastrophe management system would be desperately overloaded and the same policy of concealment would be used to avoid a panic. For this reason the catastrophe in public debates in many countries served as an argument for the abandonment of the use of atomic energy for public purposes as it had been determined by the referendum in Italy in November 1987. In response to the catastrophe the CDU-FDP coalition of Germany has created the Federal Ministry for Environment, Nuclear Safety and Preservation of Nature. In spite of the fact that the public consensus which considered atomic energy as transitional had been reached at that time the official decision on the abandonment of the use of atomic energy was adopted only by the SPD-Green government elected in 1998. In other countries, for example in France the use of atomic energy for public purposes was not questioned whereas in other countries such as Sweden or Switzerland, Chernobyl became the additional argument for acute disputes concerning the use of atomic energy. In public debates opponents of nuclear power put the fundamental problems of the use of atomic energy for public purposes into the forefront all over the world. On the contrary representatives of the nuclear lobby emphasised that Chernobyl catastrophe was caused by the Soviet management system and happened only due to defi-

ciencies of Chernobyl-type reactors designed for military purposes. In this argument they agreed with the position of the political opposition in the Soviet Union. In this sense the conflict lines in the perception of the catastrophe are global and they are not attached to concrete political systems. In fact the whole range of political conflict lines is reflected in the public discourse of each country[20].

After the Chernobyl catastrophe anti-nuclear movements were gradually formed both in the Soviet Union and in other Eastern European countries entering into the socialist camp and exploiting nuclear power stations. These processes occurred faster outside the borders of the Soviet Union because there were more intensive direct contacts with Western Europe. That was also the case in the German Democratic Republic where people had access to more information because they could watch West German television.

Members of independent initiatives for peace and environmental protection and peace spread s statement headed «Chernobyl effects everywhere» in June 1986[21]. The governments of some Eastern Europe countries abandoned or changed vainglorious plans concerning the development of the use of atomic energy in the second half of the 1980s[22]. Due to the development of the antinuclear movement in Eastern Europe the abovementioned contrast of perception in the categories of the future and the past has been smoothed. However, the environment protection movement has lost its importance in the Post-Soviet countries in the 1990s, especially due to the dramatic economic crisis. However, in the new millenium debates about climate changes has given all Europe new arguments in favour of the further development of the use of atomic energy. Therefore, the public conflicts connected with operation of nuclear power stations became again topical in all European countries.

How do they remember?

Perception of the disaster was not the only difference. A marked difference can also be traced in the forms of remembrances which had been established for the last 20 years. The main places of remembrance – the suspended nuclear power station and abandoned ghost town of Pripyat – are located in Ukraine. Thus, the Chernobyl catastrophe is primarily remembered as technical disaster. The restricted one, as well as the suspended nuclear power station with the concrete shelter called "sarcophagus" over the third destroyed block of the reactor is used for commercial purposes as tourist object. Additionally, a Chernobyl museum has been opened in Kiev due to initiatives united in «the Union of Chernobyl» and other organisations of disaster fighters. The course of the catastrophe, rescue operations as well as the destinies of left villages and people were reconstructed here[23]. Russia also has a Chernobyl museum, initiated by representatives of civil defence carrying out a huge scope of decontamination works near the destroyed reactor and in polluted areas. Therefore the remembrance about Chernobyl as technical disaster prevails here as well.

On the contrary, Belarus does not have significant central memorial places comparable with Ukraine. There is only a small church in the park of Friendship in the capital.

The monuments located in selected contaminated areas don't distinguish from the monuments to victims of the Second World War. Chernobyl is primarily remembered as a daily catastrophe which has destroyed centuries-old national culture of Polesye. Ethnologists collected items during the expeditions to left homesteads and exposed them in the half-open museum at the Academy of Sciences. The museum of icons situated on the edge of exclusion zone in Vetka became a special place of remembrance. Folk musicians collected national songs of this region and presented them at festival "Kvetka-polyn" in Minsk on the 3rd of May 2009. Some Ukrainian musicians working at this theme were also invited for this festival. The authentic places left after the catastrophe have almost disappeared by now. They were razed to the ground or settled again. Abandoned villages have been transformed into reserves in the proper sense of the word.

However, it is difficult to convey the invisible disaster with feelings. The fact that this problem was at least partly recognised became evident in terms of support to projects on «Culture and Upbringing, Transfer of Memories» in the framework of the CORE program which was finally closed in 2009. In addition, by the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe the church of remembrance of the catastrophe in the park of Friendship should be transformed to a more significant place of remembrance[24].

The discourses of remembrance in Belarus and Ukraine are united by the attitude towards the Chernobyl catastrophe as a national history of sufferings. The experience of war prevails in Belarus, though in 1990 the Belarusian writer Ales Adamovich included in the historical chain «Kuropaty, Khatyn, Chernobyl» the experience of Stalin's repressions[25]. On the contrary, the Ukraine in particular clearly emphasises the responsibility of Moscow for the Chernobyl catastrophe, which became another justification of the country´s national independence. Chernobyl was included in the same chain with the Holodomor, i.e. the huge famine deliberately organised by Stalin in Ukraine which resulted in the deaths of some millions of people in the early 1930s. It is obvious that compared to that disaster Chernobyl will fade in public mind[26].

In other European countries, the memory Chernobyl is mainly focused on anniversaries and is supported primarily by the Chernobyl aid initiatives and anti-nuclear organisations such as Green Peace. On the one hand, they use the Chernobyl disaster anniversaries for conducting protest campaign against the nuclear power use in their country or all over the world. On the other hand, they organise local, national or international exhibitions devoted to Chernobyl where the children's drawings and photos are exposed. However, according to my data there is a lack of permanent places of remembrance. Chernobyl could be integrated in permanent exhibitions of history of technics, etc. To date, only the French philosopher Paul Virilio has publicly declared about the idea of setting up a museum of technical catastrophes. He made an attempt to realize this idea during the Parisian exhibition in 2002-2003[27]. Until now the most pretentious exhibition from the perspective of an European culture of remembrance had been conducted to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe in the Center of Modern Culture in Barcelona. Along with the progress of the disaster and the rescue work described as "Chernobyl battle", that

exhibition, organised in the framework of a Basque-French cooperation, also presented the destinies of the liquidators as forgotten heroic saviour of Europe, the living conditions of people in contaminated areas, relocated people, etc. The aim was first of all to reflect on understanding human existence in a technical society with its immanent risks. The idea of «extreme anthropology» to preserve "the Ukrainian Atlantis» in the form of rural culture in Polesye was presented as well. In doing so, the exhibition used the central element of the perception of Chernobyl which is characteristic for the post-Soviet space. In contrast, the aspect of the European solidarity movement remained untouched[28].

Starting with the 20th anniversary of Chernobyl, one can trace back enhanced focus on the topic of Chernobyl in university courses. The Free University of Berlin offered an interdisciplinary set of lectures devoted to the consequences of Chernobyl in 2006. The European Humanities University in cooperation with Cohen University and the Shevchenko Kyiv University carried out a summer school devoted to Chernobyl in Russian and French languages from the 28th of August till the 3rd of September 2006. The phenomenon was considered from the philosophical, social-anthropological and political science perspectives[29].

In part, the Chernobyl topic is also covered, irrespective of anniversaries, at events dedicated to common issues of remembrance. Thus, the University of Munich conducted the course "Remembrance Carriers" in the framework of the discipline "Eastern Europe" for its students from October 2006 and other events till July 2007. Chernobyl together with the uprising in Hungary in 1956 and other events were analyzed in the framework of this course and presented in the shape of brochure[30]. The Institute of German Researches at the Ruhr University in Bochum organized of lectures on «European places of remembrance of the XX century» in which one lecture was devoted to Chernobyl along with Osventim, Danzig, Sarajevo in the winter semester 2008/2009[31].

For all European countries it is characteristic, that Chernobyl has become a metaphor to denote other terrible or emergency events. Thus, the Belarus opposition spoke about "legal Chernobyl" during the controversial referendum concerning the change of the Constitution in 1996. Sometimes the whole regime established by president Lukashenko was described as «political Chernobyl». In France, this term is used in connection with the Le Pen's success on the elections. Famous French film director Ariane Mnouchkine and other French intellectuals used the notion of "cultural Chernobyl» for the description of negative influence of "Eurodisney" on the French culture[32]. The concept of a Chernobyl syndrome is used in France in cases, when the country allegedly remains unaffected by global crises, as opposed to neighbouring countries, as was the case during the global economic crisis in 2008[33]. One can refer to a similar variety of metaphorical statements used in other countries[34].

Chernobyl was highlighted in almost all mass media. For example, the abovementioned exhibition in Barcelona also presented modern works of art – films were demonstrated, and music was performed, including a requiem for Chernobyl victims by Roman Gurko. In April, 2006 students of the Weissensee School of Art and the State academy of

design and arts of Kharkov exhibited their joint works in Berlin. During the project semester posters, animations, advertisements were created and events were conducted in the city. An exhibition entitled 'Visual energy. After Chernobyl: resources, energy and we" conducted with the financial assistance of the Ministry of Environment in Germany was illustrative for the discussions about Chernobyl in Germany[35].

In addition, Chernobyl is reflected in novels, comic books and computer games. Enki Bilal published his satire in a format of comics "Sarcophagus. Exchange of letters" in 2001. The novel of Thorsten Gyun "Chernobyl virus" appeared under the influence of the epidemic of a pork flu in 2009. Also, at the Amazon Internet store, the popular horrors computer game "Stalker - a shade of Chernobyl" developed in Kiev is sold and enjoys high popularity. According to the game scenario a new explosion of the reactor occurs, mutants appear etc. Overall, the keyword search for "Chernobyl" at Amazon results in 320 matches in German, at Amazon.com, 18072 in English, though a lot of names are mentioned several times. Anyway after 1996, the 10th anniversary of Chernobyl one can state that there was a considerable decline in publications and novels released after 2006, the 20th anniversary of Chernobyl can be counted on fingers of one hand.

That is just one indicator of the fact that the Chernobyl catastrophe is moved to the background by other catastrophes and the protracted transformation process in Belarus and Ukraine. The relegation process occurs at various levels. This also relates to Belarus which is country most contaminated with radioactive fallout. While in the mid 1990s president Lukashenko was active in promoting himself as the politician who in fact addresses overcoming the disaster effects, in recent years those effects have been thematic to a noticeably lesser extent. In addition, for the political opposition, Chernobyl has long become an ostensible topic, since annual Chernobyl marches are based on other relevant political issues such as the relationship with Russia rather than on Chernobyl-specific topics. However, it is the wish of people to relegate the invisible but omnipresent threat to the background and when coupled to their unwillingness to constantly live in "the world of interdictions", these are then the important causes of gradual oblivion[36].

Why should Chernobyl be irreplaceable part of European culture of remembrance?

Like many other events, the Chernobyl catastrophe is not an uncontroversial topic and it is perceived differently in various countries. At the same time, the threat of political instrumentalization of that topic further complicates its inclusion into the European culture of remembrance. However, it seems impossible to find a historical phenomenon about which a conflict-free memory could be constructed on the European level. The use of Chernobyl as a metaphor as well as its rethinking in different mass media shows that Chernobyl became a solid part of remembrance. And this is so despite of the fact that concrete events and effects are more frequently relegated to the background, thus complicating the self-reflective understanding of Chernobyl by society. On the one hand, active involvement

of the Chernobyl catastrophe in the developing European culture of remembrance which is obliged to the project of "cosmopolitan Europe»[37] means that it is a catastrophe with the capacity of global threat, which is an equal concern for people in Europe and all over the world. On the other hand, there is the fact that a number of European countries, as well as some others, for example, Japan´s Hiroshima and Nagasaki, both affected by atomic bombing, formed solidarity initiatives which have been active for a very long time.

Indeed, one can only conditionally speak about the European solidarity movement after Chernobyl, since most initiatives exist at a national level and are not interrelated with each other at the European level. One of the most important Belarusian-German projects, the Children's rehabilitation Health Center "Nadezhda" (Hope), which realized more than 20 international projects on health improvement in 2009 in cooperation with initiatives from six European countries and Japan. Unfortunately, those initiatives hardly maintain direct contacts with each other.

Nevertheless, initiatives established in response to Chernobyl can potentially make a significant contribution to the formation of European civil society. The special achievements of these initiatives are the ability to achieve mutual understanding and to pursue common goals. Therefore the 25th anniversary of Chernobyl should be used by politicians, scientists and actors of the civil society to analyse and document the destiny of people affected by Chernobyl and the history of the European solidarity initiatives in order to contribute not only to the formation of a European culture of remembrance uniting East and the West, but also to of as well as to support the establishment of a strong European civil society which is an integral part of the political culture of Europe.

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SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE OF CHERNOBYL: LABORATORIES OF POLITICAL DECISIONS

Key concepts:

Humane discourse is a discourse of scientific discussions and concepts of the effect of the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster on a human being and the environment, based on a hypothesis of admissible risk and nonthreshold impact of radiation on human health.

Technogenic discourse is a discourse of scientific discussions and concepts of the effect of the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster on a human being and the environment, based on a hypothesis of a doze influence of radiation on human health and possible habitation on the territories with an excessive level of radioactive contamination.

Introduction

The Chernobyl disaster on April 26th, 1986 and its long-term radioecological consequences generated a number of threats for the environment and human health caused by radioactive contamination along with new threats to the development of science both as a way of thinking and a combination of knowledge and institutions producing it. The uncertainty, discrepancy, and incompleteness of knowledge about Chernobyl became an additional source of alarm and risk. The knowledge about Chernobyl is a source of risk earlier used in the BSSR and currently used in Belarus as the foundation for the formation of the state policy aimed at liquidating the consequences of the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant (CNPP).

The state Chernobyl policy to liquidate, overcome and minimize the consequences of the CNPP accident has been realized since the accident. However, one should keep in mind that this policy is based on specific knowledge in technical, medical, biological and humanitarian fields. In other words, scientific institutions and scientists engaged in the research of Chernobyl's consequences, especially the im-

pact of radiation, serve as the actors of the Chernobyl policy because the knowledge they produce forms the basis of political practices needed to construct the post-Chernobyl reality. Studying the practices of the production of the "Chernobyl knowledge" or the knowledge about the disaster consequences is a part of the research of the Chernobyl policy. How was the Chernobyl disaster and especially its consequences managed by different scientists and scientific institutions whose scientific decisions laid down the basis of the policy of liquidating, overcoming and minimizing the consequences of the Chernobyl accident first in the USSR and BSSR and later in Belarus?

The formation of directions and priorities of the Chernobyl policy depended on how the consequences of the problem were understood and how the problems which this policy was supposed to resolve were defined. Therefore, at different stages the Chernobyl policy was determined and carried out differently depending on the actors involved in the process of defining the phenomenon "Chernobyl". In order to trace the formation and to analyze the displays of various Chernobyl concepts in the Chernobyl policy, one should know how Chernobyl was portrayed in the discourse of public actors, specifically, of various scientists and scientific institutions. Thus, it is necessary to show how the concepts of the Chernobyl policy mobilizing various scientific discourses are formed.

In the Context of the Sociology of Knowledge

Ulrich Beck in his book "Risk Society. Towards a New Modernity" (1986) draws a picture of a new society where the individual is compelled to build the protection independently and to struggle against uncertainty. Modern science becomes an area of a multitude of opinions and judgments where everyone can find his own suitable explanation and where expert knowledge that has been monopolizing the field of "the unknown" for an extended period of time becomes inconsistent and creates even a greater situation of uncertainty and ambiguity. Science itself pretending to provide an explanation of reality and submission of the surrounding world to natural phenomena turns into a complex phenomenon subject to the influence of numerous social actors such as media, politicians, and protest movements demanding a comprehensive explanation.

Thus, according to Beck, the feeling of safety and security is overcome by the feeling of danger, anxiety and fear. One cannot insist that such moods were absent in industrial society; they just had a latent character. When speaking about the transition from the "old" to the "new" modernity Beck points out the aggravation of the perception of danger, the overcoming of latency and more complicated actions of actors involved in the modernization.

Beck describes a new reality using such terms as "danger" and "threat" to make everyone feel the emotional component of the new different modernity where fear and anxiety move to the foreground in social reality. Beck reduces the feeling of fear and anxiety to the category of "risk", which defines or can define both the condition of the individual in a political, social and natural environment and the attitude to him. Beck believes that a danger is becoming less and less predictable because, no matter how strange it may seem, it

exists in the structure of knowledge. Though "new threats are expressed in the language of chemical formulas, biological interrelations and medical and diagnostic concepts" (Beck, 2000, p. 34), it is not the knowledge itself that generates danger but the knowledge about the ignorance of full consequences of this or that phenomenon that is more often than not produced by science itself. In this case, Beck does not actually describe the real threat that is specific and materially expressed but rather "the threatening possibility" of something that will necessarily occur.

The German philosopher Guenter Anders (Anders, 1986, ed. 2006) writes that in modern society neither risk nor danger consists of the overcoming of the danger latency. It is much more important to realize that this danger can be or is invisible, i.e.; it cannot be judged either visually or sensually. This is what creates the danger of modernity representing the reduction of the importance of the sensual (as a contact with the environment) and social experience of the individual (Beck, 2000, p. 36). Thus, Beck calls into question scientific rationality confirming it with his thesis about "the democratization of natural sciences" which have learnt to consider the society's right to express its own opinion. Beck believes that in this case scientific rationality acts as a legitimate cover of scientific and technical progress.

According to the concept of Beck's "risk society", the development of science leads not only to the production of some new knowledge but also to a new uncertainty and unpredictability which do not give in to the calculations and probability of scientific tools. However, Borraz argues that such an approach has essential drawbacks such as the complexity of the empirical proof and a certain difficulty in studying such aspects as the display of risk in practices and discourses (Borraz, 2008, p. 11). Borraz suggests considering the transformed concept of risk as "a result of the process of quality investment promoting the reduction of uncertainty and ambiguity which surround an activity, a chemical substance, or an industrial target" (Ibid, p. 13). Thus, by dividing two processes and ascribing quantitative (quantification) and qualitative (qualification) values to risk, Borraz initiates the investigation of not only risks but also the study of the risk creation process or, more specifically, the social and political designing of risks.

In modern society, risk is defined by the degree of knowledge or representation about what danger or threat is born by this or that object or this or that phenomenon. Therefore, the sociology of knowledge or the sociology of science moves to the forefront in risk studying, especially if it is a technogenic risk. The study is aimed mainly at analyzing the role of science in the creation of scientific facts and social designing of risks. Accordingly, the knowledge of natural, social and other phenomena is created and produced in the conditions of not only indefiniteness but also uncertainty that the given *reason* will lead to the given *consequence* that in its turn will not lead to the new *reason* and absolutely unpredictable *consequence*. The gap between the uncertainty and knowledge increases and in science "known unknowns" gives way to "unknown unknowns" (Borraz, 2008, p.15). To reduce the gap science should find new forms not only in the methodology of studying unknown phenomena but also in relations with society.

Jasanoff uses the concept of a “regulating or controlling science”, which “constantly retrieves the necessary legitimating from the name “science” though sociologically it is a kind of activity that is absolutely distinct from basic research” (2005, p. 108). Unlike a regular science the promotion mechanisms of which include “indefiniteness, uncertainty, convention and unexpectedness”, a “regulative science” requires mechanisms of protection and closeness such as limited expert communities because it should remain in the “black box” and maintain its certain and unconditional status. Jasanoff expands not only the role of science in politics but also provides it with characteristics of power, namely, as an area of not only the development of scientific knowledge as substantiations for making these or those political decisions but also as a way to influence the making of some specific political decisions. Science as the knowledge about technologies and a means of its production is not only entered into the context of separation of power on the basis of exclusive competence but also aspires to become a political actor whose characteristics include the struggle for resources, imperious relations and ways of domination.

Callon, in particular, speaks about the emergence of new actors capable of combining a political strategy with scientific innovations in an uncertain environment produced by new technologies. First of all, a state is a set of administrative agencies and institutes and not in a condition to evaluate the innovative introduction from a technical and political point of view as, for example, the history of electricity shows, “The state possesses practically no ability of analysis which would be peculiar to it. (...) this absence of analysis concerns both technologies and social system. (...) The administration is not capable of translating technical distinctions which appear in a situation of innovations into the language of politics” (Callon, 1979, p. 445-446). In this case one deals not so much with the helplessness and powerlessness of administrative bodies but rather with the impossibility of converging technical substantiations into a political choice resulting either in a “superpoliticized” or “supertechnical” way of administrating innovations, “... administration finds itself in a difficult condition torn between politics and technics passing from one to the other without having any possibility to establish mutual understanding between them” (Ibid, p. 446). At the same time one needs to remember that science is characterized by competitiveness in the political space and also a high competition inside the scientific community leading to the exclusion of some actors, scientific judgments and assumptions from the process of the political decision legitimation.

As far as the question regarding the legitimacy of the scientific knowledge is concerned, one might find it useful to study the division described by Clark and Majone. They prefer the categories of the “supernatural” and “civil” legitimacy of the scientific research. In the former, we deal with the question of legitimacy that is “a derivative of the higher authority which cannot be asked questions” while in the latter one comes across “some free arrangement or contract or obligation to follow certain rules and the consent to some procedures” (Clark, Majone, 1985, p. 16). Clark and Majone understand civil legitimacy as a modern constitutional system and as economic systems. In other words, one deals with the firmness, indivisibility and indisputability of the scientific knowledge while on the other

side it is the knowledge based on the discussion and debate and certain rules of acceptance of this knowledge both by the academic community and society on the whole.

In their works, Callon and Latour concentrate not so much on the sociological analysis of scientific facts. They are more interested in the emergence of a possible new paradigm or a research direction of "technoscience" allowing to consider and explain the creation of a scientific fact through a combination of conditions and practices, processes and discourses, technics and technologies producing "science in action" (Latour, 1989). The creation of a scientific fact represents a process caused by various circumstances, material objects, scientific toolkits, institutions, other researchers, environment, and the place of knowledge production. Latour believes that all of the abovementioned makes *the network* created by a scientist and used by a scientist as a dispositive for fact designing. This process is not only the process of social designing but it also includes previous practices which are difficult to trace, "… we do not claim that the facts are socially designed. We would like to say as well that the process of designing involves some dispositives which in many respects complicate the detection of traces of their production" (Latour, Woolgar, 1988, p. 180).

The research of a scientific fact as a process of designing does not eliminate the question that the defining element is the context in which the given fact is produced. The content, meaning and variables might also be the determining factor if the scientist uses them to fill in the scientific fact. The above-mentioned authors believe that the defining element is a binding element between the context and the content of the scientific fact production with the fact becoming expressed in the process of translation. It is not a simple transition from something difficult and unclear to something that is simple and clear, namely, a combination of all variety of factors, actors and the network creating *conditions* for the advancement of the scientific fact through the whole combination of opinions, judgments and other scientific facts and physical circumstances. In other words, when creating a theory a scientist should be able to consider the most diverse but not purely scientific interests for the scientific fact to acquire the form of such. That is why some modern tendencies of the sociology of science aspire to the sociology of the social fact allowing, first of all, to disclose the scientific activity or an activity for the production of a scientific fact as a social phenomenon explained by other social phenomena.

Borraz asserts that this concept allows to apply progressive, regressive and interaction dynamics to science, "… the researcher influences his objects of research which in their turn influence the researcher and the network that surrounds him and that also cooperates with the researcher. At the same time it structures and models scientific objects and provides them with meaning. Thus, a complex scheme of interactions and movement of resources, various means and scientific objects which deprive the gap between the external and internal environment of the laboratory of any sense" (Borraz, 1990, p. 143) is emerging.

The above identified modern tendencies in the sociology of science and knowledge pay attention not so much to the relation between power and knowledge but to the redefinition of the image of society and form of democracy. In particular, Callon, Lascoumes

and Barthe (2001) call into question the essence of representative democracy based on the critical analysis of the examination used by politicians. The moving to the foreground of the experts' opinion not only strengthens science democratization (Beck, 2000) by giving everyone a chance to operate using scientific facts while maintaining one's own scientific judgment but it also allows to lead the scientific debate from laboratories to the public scene. There is a certain substitution by the public debate of scientific disputes and struggle of opinions which lose their importance. The authors believe that such a substitution can only be avoided by the creation of new dialogue procedures involving various actors on the one hand, which strengthen a pluralistic component, and creating the environment for a scientific dispute and struggle of opinions on the other hand.

According to the concept of "political ecology" offered by Latour (Latour, 2004), lately the humankind has been making attempts to expand the gap between society and nature assigning science the role of the arbitrator. Therefore, if one is to reconcile man and the environment it is necessary to overestimate the role of science and knowledge in this system or become free from that concept of "nature" which has been generated for centuries. Using the methods of the sociology of science, Latour analyzes how in modern conditions the development of politics and science came to the present understanding of nature and the present democratic form.[1] For this purpose one needs to distinguish the practice and theory of "political ecology" where the latter is a process of creation of representations about nature while the former is science, morals, law and politics but not nature. Thus, ecological crises have no relation to nature or the world around but are related only to the society which provided natural things with meanings of "risk", "danger" and "threat". What was "simple" in nature became dangerous in society.[2] The problems of ecology are not what happens to nature and the world surrounding us but what happens to society in the given environment.

Such reconsideration of the "ecological" and "political" reality forces Latour to conclude that because of a false opinion about nature there formed a false opinion about the arrangement of the society which is called democratic and in which an individual possessing fundamental rights and freedoms seems to be deprived of the freedom to think and be himself in the world surrounding him. This principle of society's existence is predetermined, and a multitude of incurable ecological crises, natural disasters, dangerous viruses and illnesses cannot shake the settled order of things. Thus, Latour suggests thinking about it and participating in the creation of a new policy where the "political ecology" will no longer be a simple form of the policy including questions of nature into the democratic functioning of the society. It will change not the nature but the social system.

Scientific Institutions and Societies

Institutes or centers developing the scientific solution of post-Chernobyl problems are original centers for the production of the scientific knowledge necessary for making political decisions in the field of the Chernobyl policy. These institutions include the Republican

Research Centre for Radiation Medicine and Human Ecology, the Institute of Radiobiology, the Institute of Forest, and the Belarusian Scientific Research Institute of Agricultural Radiology.

The role of scientific institutions and societies in the Chernobyl policy is expressed, first of all, in working out and accepting scientific concepts such as the concepts of "35 rem"[3], the concept of residing on the territories polluted with radionuclides as a result of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant[4], the concept of keeping the alienation zones[5]; the concept of protective measures during the rehabilitation period for the population living on the Belarusian territory radioactively contaminated as a result of the Chernobyl disaster[6]; the concept of residing of the population on the territories polluted with radionuclides and the development of towns and villages located on such territories[7]; the concept of rehabilitation of the population and territories affected after the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant.[8]

The development and acceptance of such concepts had an exceptionally great importance for the political decision making because the data of the scientifically proved concepts of consequences of the Chernobyl accident served as the base for the main standard documents regulating the status of polluted territories and the rights and duties of the population living there, "The preparation of such concepts in general consisted of groups of experts at academies of sciences or at the corresponding commissions of the Supreme Councils of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine getting ready the documents which were discussed at the sessions of the Supreme Councils and served as the foundation for laws regulating the legal regime of the territories radioactively contaminated as a result of the disaster at the CNPP" (Barjahtar, 1995).

It is possible to say that the scientific justification represented certain frameworks for the actions of political actors. It also equipped political actors with a certain system of perception (values and indicators) of Chernobyl problems needed for the decision-making and political action realizing. This principle of the organization of a cognitive semantic matrix of Chernobyl problems was then adopted in the government programs of the Republic of Belarus for the overcoming of disaster consequences with one of the most essential tasks being the working out of a scientific justification of the political decision making in order to solve Chernobyl problems.

Such concepts were adopted at different stages of the Belarusian political system forming. They demonstrate the degree and level of the scientific approach used to solve Chernobyl problems along with its political application. Besides, these concepts contain a varying scientific discourse and different perceptions of Chernobyl problems and offer ways of their solving. The discussions devoted to scientific concepts reflect contradictions and opposition of the discourses expressing a different logic of the Chernobyl policy vision, namely, a technogenic and humane scientific discourse.

First of all, we should identify the periods of the adoption of concepts and the development of scientific discussions. The first period lasted from 1988 till 1991. During that time, two main conceptions were adopted, specifically, the concept of the Academy of Sciences

(AS) of the USSR called "35 rem" and the concept of the Academy of Sciences of the BSSR about residing on the territories polluted with radionuclides as a result of the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. This period is characterized by the opposition between the scientists of the USSR, in particular academician L.A. Ilyin, and the scientists of the AS of the BSSR who developed the "Belarusian" concept. The discourse of the "35 rem" conception was especially important during that period as it was forming a technogenic scientific discourse and developing certain discourse elements which would later be reproduced by Petryaev's group that presented the "Concepts of protective measures during the rehabilitation period for the population living on the Belarusian territory radioactively contaminated as a result of the Chernobyl disaster". The adoption of this concept in 1995 was accompanied by extensive scientific discussions and debates from 1993 when the concept was about to be elaborated. The next period includes an interval between 1995 and 2002. This period is characterized by scientific discussions (before 1998), the adoption of the "Concepts of residing of the population on the territories contaminated with radionuclides and the development of towns and villages located on those territories" after which up to 2002 and until the adoption of the "Concept of rehabilitation of the population and territories which were affected as a result of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant" there were no more scientific discussions and two scientific discourse-coalitions of the Chernobyl policy were finally formed.

The technogenic scientific discourse consists of the discourse "35 rem" of the AS of the USSR; the discourse of scientists from Petryaev's group who developed the "Concept of protective measures during the rehabilitation period for the population living on the Belarusian territory radioactively contaminated as a result of the Chernobyl disaster" (1995) along with other concepts up to 2002.

The humane scientific discourse consists of the discourse of scientists who developed "Concepts of residing on the territories contaminated with radionuclides as a result of the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant" in 1990 as well as the discourse of scientists who resisted the adoption of the subsequent concepts of 1995, 1998 and 2002. One can also assume that the main opposition was most active from 1988 till 1995 because the scientific discourse of two various coalitions was formed exactly during that period.

Technogenic Scientific Discourse

The forming of a technogenic scientific discourse is connected with the working out by the Soviet scientists of the concept of a safe life of the population on the contaminated territories with the concept of "35 rem"[9] serving as the basis of it. The development of that concept presupposed its further adoption and application on the contaminated territories and relied on the principle of intervention into the life activity of a human being depending on the degree of the radiation level, "In each specific case it is necessary on the basis of the knowledge of radiation levels and the character of radionuclide contamination to form a certain strategy of behavior which will provide the maximum positive effect of these or

those interventions directed to the limitation of dozes. This strategy of behavior visible in the introduction of certain intervention measures is based on a certain general idea called the concept of a safe life activity of the population on the contaminated territories. In general, it means that the measures of intervention into a human life should provide the decrease of the received radiation dose to the radiation level before the disaster".[10] The intervention measures reducing the dose of radionuclide contamination include such protective actions as the provision of shelter, prevention by using stable iodine, the evacuation and resettlement procedures as well as the control of the food consumed.

As it has already been noted, the concept of a safe ability of the population to live on contaminated territories was originally based on the concept of "35 rem" developed only in 1988 two years after the accident. Till that moment all the decisions regarding both the liquidation of consequences and the residing of the population on the contaminated territories did not have any scientific ground. The main reason for it was that all the data and results of radioactive monitoring necessary for a scientific analysis were classified.

The first step towards the concept adoption was the approval of the individual dose limit based on the assumption that there is a certain lifelong accumulated top doze safe for a man or for a period of 70 years. In 1989 this indicator was offered as an additional reason for the resettlement. The chairman of the National Commission on Radiation Protection of the USSR professor L.A. Ilyin, the main sanitary inspector of the USSR A.I. Kondrusev and his assistant A.I. Zajchenko determined the numerical value of the doze equal 350 mSv.[11] The main argument was the data of the research carried out after the explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki where the dependence between the irradiation of less than 500 mSv and both oncological and genetic consequences was not established. Another argument used was the economic feasibility of the measures aimed at the liquidation without any further re-settlement from the contaminated territories.

This concept was presented as obligatory for adoption in all affected republics and had an imperative character, "We have included into the life dose all doses received during the emergency period. This is essential. This is the concept of the National Committee on Radiation Protection. We have established this limit at 35 rem and not higher. This is our main rigid and categorical requirement".[12] The adoption of this concept represented the interests and strategy of political and scientific high-ranking officials which consisted of the declaration of a certain order and vision of consequences of the Chernobyl accident prohibiting any doubts about the existing political and scientific system.

The discourse of the concept "35 rem" introduced a certain number of discourse elements which reflect the influence on the forming of Chernobyl. First of all, it is a question of the discourse of risk and safety expressed in the concept in the following way: the effect of radiation on a human body and the environment finds its expression not in the concentration of radionuclides but in the received irradiation dose. "It is important to remember that there exist elementary bases and positions according to which a measure of dangerous radiation impact is not the concentration of radionuclides. I would underline that it is the total dose of irradiation".[13]

This principle assumes that the main danger of residing on the contaminated territories lies in the total irradiation dose of a person rather than the concentration of radionuclides in a body, food, and territory. If one is to follow this principle then it is possible to live on the contaminated areas if the total irradiation dose does not exceed the established norm. Thus, the inhabitants of the territories with the density of contamination of 15 Ci per square kilometer and higher are not subject to resettlement. The foundation of the concept is the principle of an economic gain. If we use the non-threshold principle as the basis, namely, the fact that even the smallest radiation dose can affect the health and life ability of a person then there is a need for the adoption of additional decisions about the resettlement and use of additional measures of the population protection, "When offering and developing different concepts it is necessary to take into account the economic feasibility such as how much it may cost to move 20 thousand, 50 or 200? Besides, why re-settle only from the territory with 15 Ci/km? There is "contaminated" milk on the territories with the radioactive contamination of 5 Ci/km while there is "clean" milk on the territories with 40Ci/km?"[14]

Hence, the main argument of the "35 rem" discourse is, first of all, the economic evaluation of the subsequent political decisions about the resettlement or introductions of additional intervening measures. One should also remember that this concept is accepted as the decision-making should have its scientific legitimacy, "That is why the National Commission on Radiation Safety takes a huge responsibility upon itself and sets the admissible limit of 35 rem for life. It does not mean that we provide health protection bodies and other organizations the indicator of health which they are obliged to adhere to and which they are obliged to fulfill. At the same time it is not some kind of a norm. Rather, it is a limit and a criterion for decision-making".[15] Thus, it is possible to say that the discourse of the Soviet scientists who developed the given concept of "35 rem" treats the dose limitation not as a limit but as a level of the political decision making though the exceeding of the dose may lead to various consequences.

The discourse "35 rem" uses scientifically confirmed data and is based on a considerable amount of research the results of which objectively reflect the existing reality and deny the influence of small radiation doses on the health of a man unlike other results which represent a fact manipulation, "The base of the 35 rem concept is the analysis of a huge volume of material. (…) I declare with full responsibility that obvious changes arise only when the dose is from 25 rem per year or 75-120 rem per life. There were no deviations found at lower doses. We cannot reject this experience. It is an objective reality".[16] "I have been examining the children as a pediatrician since the very first days of the disaster. Neither me, nor my colleagues managed to find any direct impact of small radiation doses on a child's organism which could lead to serious consequences. Data about a sharp increase in the number of illnesses is a manipulation of facts".[17]

Summarizing the aforesaid, it is necessary to point out that the "35 rem" discourse consists of a number of arguments. There is a certain radiation limit. If one follows it then it one will be able to avoid health consequences. It is not the concentration of radionuclides

that is dangerous for a man but the received dose. Doses of less than 35 rem are not dangerous. This has been proved by a scientific research. Thus, the forming of the concept of the consequences of the CNNP disaster reflecting a certain construction of the post-Chernobyl reality starts. It includes the scientific legitimating of the already taken measures of the state intervention and safe living on contaminated territories without a dramatic change in the population's way of living along with the forming of representations of Chernobyl consequences as those which are not dangerous and which can be liquidated within a certain period of time through the use of specific means.

We should also say that the adoption of this concept is in a certain way an imposition of a certain image of Chernobyl as an ordinary accident that did not lead to any significant changes, "They have probably run out of scientific methods of struggle for the preservation of their concept. That is why the main argument used was the government administrative pressure" (Yaroshinskaya, 2006, p.160). This has to do with decree #587 of the National Commission on Liquidation of Consequences of the Accident at the Chernobyl NPP which promoted the offered concept of "35 rem" of the AS of the USSR and which offered to use it as the basis for the development of the State Program for the liquidation of consequences. This concept produced another obvious benefit for the existing political system as it didn't initiate any noticeable changes in the established normative political and ideological order. Its implication was actually the unacceptance of certain state measures such as the discontinuance of re-settlement, carrying on agricultural activities on the contaminated territories, etc.

"The basis of this policy carried out by central ministries from the very first days of the Chernobyl disaster, namely, from the end of 1987 was the concept "35 rem per life" that was supposed to solve a number of problems. Among them was the task to reassure the public opinion, to remove the responsibility for the disaster consequences from the party and state bodies and specific individuals, to reduce the amount of compensation to the people who were affected and dwellers of the contaminated areas for the damage done as well as to present the groundlessness of the anxiety about life (from the speech of the people's deputy of the USSR and a member of the Committee on Ecology and Rational Use of Resources during Parliamentary hearings).[18]

However, the "35 rem" concept though used as the basis of several decisions of the Ministry of Health of the USSR was not adopted by the Supreme Council of the BSSR to a great extent due to the resistance of the scientists from Belarus, Ukraine and Russia, in particular, during the First All-Union Radiobiological congress in 1990. Other concepts appeared only in 1990-1991 and were based on a lower personal radiation dose[19] such as the concept of residing on the territories contaminated with radionuclides as a result of the catastrophe at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant approved by the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the BSSR in 1990.

In spite of the fact that the concept "35 rem" did not serve as the base upon the development of the "Concept of safe living" (1990) the scientific discourse which became the foundation for this concept was later used by scientists when they worked out the "Concept

of protective measures during the rehabilitation period for the population residing on the territories of the Republic of Belarus that was contaminated as a result of the Chernobyl accident" (1995). Discussions about that concept found their reflection in the press, scientific community and civil society. This concept became the dividing line which showed the opposition and contradiction of two different scientific discourses (technogenic and humane), "In 1995 there appeared a "team" in Belarus though a number of most respectable scientists did not join it. The team revived the 35 rem concept. Only the old name was substituted to a new "Concept of protective measures during the rehabilitation period for the population residing on the Belarusian territory radioactively contaminated as a result of the Chernobyl accident". Among those who identified their authorship were prof. Petryaev E.P. (Director of the Institute of Radiobiology), doctor of biological sciences Kenigsberg Ya.E. (Deputy Director of the Scientific Research Institute of Radioactive Medicine), Ternov B.I. (Head of the National Commission on Radioactive Protection) and a few others".[20]

It should be added that the discussions of this concept actually started a little bit earlier than in 1993 when in accordance with the instruction of the Council of Ministers #57p from 25.01.1993 a temporary creative team (TCT) was set up with E.P. Petryaev as the head. Using the available dose indicators the team was supposed to develop the project of the concept of the rehabilitation of the contaminated areas and life conditions of people residing on those territories. In 1995 after several projects the concept was first approved by the National Commission on Radioactive Protection (NCRP) and then by the Council of Ministers. However, in February 1993 deputy head of the Council of Ministers I.A. Kenik issued an instruction to form a working group including, among others, prof. V. B. Nesterenko to prepare the concept of the main protective measures for the population living on contaminated Belarusian territories. The concept was later approved at the meeting of the NCRP of Belarus in May 1993. "Petryaev's group supported by the Institute of Radiobiology of the BSSR and the NCRP of Belarus was forming the discourse of "liquidation" while an alternative group of scientists consisting of V.B. Nesterenko, G.F. Lepin, and M.V. Mal'ko among others and represented by the Institute of Radioactive Safety run by I.N. Smolyar followed the discourse of "overcoming". Accordingly, from 1993 to 1995 a competitive space was formed between different groups working on the same problem but representing absolutely opposite views on Chernobyl.

The scientific discourse of Petryaev's group is built practically around the same principle of "35 rem" such as "a further reduction of radioactive risk determined by the radioactive contamination as a result of the Chernobyl accident by gradually decreasing individual and collective dozes of population irradiation. Protective measures should be optimized to produce more use than harm. The realization of the optimization principle should be based on the calculation of the prevented collective dose from the moment of introduction of protection measures".[21] This means that the dose received before the use of protection measures or the accumulated does is not accounted for. Thus, this concept introduces certain logic of the limit existence, namely, an annual average equivalent irradiation dose which is 1 mSv per year. This limit sets the level of intervention and application

of the measures of radioactive safety. In other words, there is no need to carry out protective measures on the territories where the radiation level does not exceed the given limit at the same time not paying attention to the level of contamination of the territory and the ability to lead a normal life. Hence, the use of the degree of radioactive protection is tied to the dose received by a man per year but not to the level of contamination of territories where a man lives, "The authors of the concept referring to the fact that irradiation doses define medical effects propose to reject the use of the criteria for the use of protection measures based on the contamination level".[22]

One more important element of the concept's discourse is stating that the rehabilitation period after the Chernobyl disaster started in Belarus, "The rehabilitation period has been continuing for a period of time necessary for the gradual cancellation of the activities for radioactive protection and creation of conditions required for the return to the normal way of life of the population residing on the territories contaminated with radionuclides. The concept was formed on the basis of the start of the rehabilitation stage of development of the Chernobyl accident".[23] This period can also be defined as a period of transition to the normal living conditions. In other words, according to this concept already in 1995 the affected population and territories were already at the stage of returning to the normal conditions of life and activities.

In later concepts in 1998 and 2002 the technogenic scientific discourse takes more and more defined forms and is expressed, first of all, in the understanding of the annual average effective dose as the criterion for the use of protective measures as well as the continuation of the development of the contaminated territories. For example, the concept introduced in 2002 uses the principle of rehabilitation through the transformation of the territories into areas suitable for living.

At present the official scientific discourse is dominated by the elements of the technogenic discourse. Ya.E. Kenigsberg (Head of the National Commission on Radioactive Protection at the Council of Ministries of Belarus) believes that the main problem solved by the Chernobyl policy is the decrease of irradiation doses of the population to the minimum level which does not lead to any medical consequences, "As a result of the Chernobyl accident the conditions of life were destroyed but from the radiological point of view positive perspectives for the future health of the majority of the affected people have been reached. So this is a paradox. It is a catastrophe, terror, a zone of an ecological disaster but people live there, eat contaminated food. What happens there is horrible. Here are the objective data. How and why? But this is not a paradox because we started work aimed at the protection of the population. Unlike others, for instance, a number of other former Soviet republics we started this work April 30th, 1986. We began the first wave of the population resettlement from the 30 km zone and farther areas already on May 2. We spent more than 27 million dollars from the budget of the Republic of Belarus and sent the money to provide the radioactive protection. The main goal of our work was to lower the irradiation dose to the level where it could not do any harm for the people's health. We did it. But when the question arises that the level of social protection is lower than in

Russia and Ukraine in a monetary equivalent then it is true. We spent all this money on the radioactive protection."[24] It should also be mentioned that carrying out the radioactive protection activities became the main and distinctive direction of the Chernobyl policy in Belarus where the major goal is lowering the dose of population irradiation. In Ukraine, for example, the leading direction of the Chernobyl policy is the social protection of citizens who suffered from the consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident. Thus, the development of scientific ways to reduce the radiation doses and thus the influence of radiation on the people's health will allow to move the Chernobyl policy into the direction of settling the contaminated areas.

The main feature of the Chernobyl policy at the current stage is the development of the affected territories and the decrease of radiation impact on the people's health, "There are official data of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Belarus showing that the biggest number of draftees who are healthy and fit to serve in the army are from the Gomel region. Is it a paradox? No, it isn't. I have already told you about social protection and health improvement… No, I can't tell you that there are no problems, they do exist but they are solved in a right way within the frame of the national programs and within the frame of the union state (…) so, there is one goal and that is rehabilitation and a steady development. The same aim was set by the head of our state[25]: to move from rehabilitation to the steady development of the territories which were affected as a result of the consequences of the accident at the CNPP. Our task is also to assist in the correct understanding of the Chernobyl policy".[26] We can see the intertwining of the political and scientific discourse about Chernobyl and the forming of the common concept of Chernobyl in the given context.

Humane Scientific Discourse

An alternative scientific discourse, namely, humane, began to form already during the existence of the BSSR and is connected with the resistance of Belarusian scientists to the adoption of the "35 rem" concept. In this context it is important to see that the concept "35 rem" became an example of opposition among the scientific community and laid the foundation of the discourse that became an alternative to the official discourse of "liquidation". Even now the opposition of the official scientific concept is revealed in the discourse or language of resistance to "35 rem".

First of all, we find it important to remind that the scientific discourse of Belarusian scientists at the end of the 1980s was institutionally supported by the Supreme Council as a discourse of the concept alternative to "35 rem" the validity of which was doubted, "A group of scientists consisting of 92 people has just recently sent a letter to M.S. Gorbachev regarding the issues connected with the residing on the contaminated territories. The letter was used as an attempt to convince the Supreme Council of the USSR with the help of scientific degrees and titles that there is no danger for the people and the contaminated land is almost a paradise place. Who and when gave them the right to decide everything

including our fate even though they've got degrees? Why is the 35 concept being justified so actively now? I was present at the meeting of the Presidium of the AS of the USSR when this concept was being discussed. Academician Anatoly Petrovich Alexandrov told us, "Let's not argue about this concept. Let's just accept 35 rem. Time will pass, and later we will see whether it is harmful or harmless. Maybe this figure will change here, maybe this indicator will change in the International Atomic Energy Agency."[27]

On April 25, 1990 during the session of the Supreme Council of the USSR the decree about the liquidation problems of the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster which included a number of statements allowing to develop scientific and public discussions about the concept of residing on the contaminated territories was signed. First of all, this decree approved but not adopted the program of the BSSR aimed at the liquidation of consequences of the accident at the CNPP based on the conception of Belarusian scientists but not on the "35 rem" concept showing certain institutional support of the Supreme Council of the USSR. Secondly, the decision was made to develop a complex approach to the liquidation of consequences for all affected republics. Thirdly, the decree was used to create a working group of the AS of the USSR, BSSR and USSR for the development of an alternative "humane" concept. The results were to be presented in October 1990. The president of the AS of the USSR academician B.P. Platonov supported the concept of Belarusian scientists having characterized a new approach to Chernobyl consequences in the following way, "The fallacy of the opinion is that the accident at the CNPP is an accident the consequences of which can be liquidated. The scale of the disaster is such that we can speak only about the possibility of minimizing its consequences".[28]

The institutional support of Belarusian scientists allowed the Belarusian concept of safe residing to take a strong position against the "35 rem" concept. The Belarusian concept also turned into a political challenge for the Soviet system. For instance, the Concept of residing on the territories contaminated with radionuclides as a result of the accident at the CNPP approved by the Presidium of the AS of the BSSR in 1990 identified a number of scientific norms and indicators such as the limit of irradiation[29] for the people residing on the contaminated territories and the division into zones.[30] It also contained general principles forming the Chernobyl policy. This concept was named the "humane" concept. It states that, first of all, any, even the smallest radiation dose, affects the health of a person and that, secondly, a step by step re-settlement of the population from the contaminated areas is required. To support the first principle the scientists introduced the term "acceptable risk" that changed the principle of absolute safety of the exploitation of nuclear energy along with the principle of the threshold value of the impact of the radiation dose on man's health, "Any, even the smallest additional radiation dose is not safe for a life organism and it requires the using of measures aimed at its reduction (it is an internationally recognized principle of ALARA). So we cannot speak about an absolute safety. We should speak about an acceptable risk."[31]

Thus, it was established that radiation presents a danger for man's health and that any radiation level should not be treated as an absolutely safe one but as a situation possessing

a certain degree of risk. The approval of these principles of understanding the Chernobyl accident consequences did not only define the forming of the Chernobyl policy but also influenced the understanding of Chernobyl problems by public actors themselves.

The acceptance of this concept was preceded by the discussions which showed the difference in the value and science approach towards the explanation and solving of post-Chernobyl problems. Discussions mainly dealt with the principle of survival meaning that it is impossible to live there where it is impossible to produce clean food/goods. Such an approach did not only dramatically change the Chernobyl policy at the current stage demanding the adoption of urgent measures for the resettlement but also the perception of Chernobyl transforming Chernobyl problems from short-term into long-term ones. However, this does not exactly correspond to the present political conception of the Chernobyl policy. The approval of this principle also presupposed a change in the concept of radiation impact, more specifically, the necessity to measure its effects judging not by the level of land contamination but by the accumulated doses. This principle also changes the approach to the Chernobyl policy as it changes classifications and categories of the population, degrees and ways of intervention along with the kinds of radioactive protection of the affected population. Hence, the population should be classified not according to the place of residence but according to the accumulated dose. A liquidator who participated in the activities in 1986 and a person living on the territory with the contamination of more than 40 CI/sq km form one and the same "Chernobyl" group.[32]

The humane scientific discourse is formed in opposition to the technogenic discourse. It becomes especially obvious during the period of the discussion and adoption of the "Concept of protection measures during the rehabilitation period for the population residing on the Belarusian territory radioactively contaminated as a result of the Chernobyl accident". The approval of this concept was also forerun by scientific discussions and the development of alternative conceptions including the conception of prof. Nesterenko in 1993. That conception continued the introduction of the principle of the humane discourse. A group of scientists headed by prof. Nesterenko emphasized the discourse dealing with the influence of protection measures according to which positive results may be combined with negative consequences, "The realization of protection measures is an intervention which along with a positive effect of the reduction of the irradiation level may lead to the economic and ecological damage as well as psychological effect due to the change in the way of life of the population and risk of a negative influence on health. That is why when making an intervention decision one should consider not only its presumed positive effect but also the negative consequences of the protective measure itself (irradiation of liquidation participants, radioactive contamination, economic damage).[33]

Another argument of the present scientific discourse is the denial of the rehabilitation period of the Chernobyl policy at the beginning of the 1990s, "We did not manage to decrease the share of food and agricultural products containing radionuclides with the level higher than RPL-92 (Republican permissible level), we didn't manage to decrease a significant further growth of the collective irradiation dose. (…) Lately due to an insuf-

ficient amount of the used mineral fertilizers in public and individual agriculture in the areas affected by the Chernobyl disaster there is a large number of products containing radionuclides such as Cs-137 with the level higher than RPL-92. (…) The analysis of the dynamics of the condition of the population health in 1993 in comparison with 1992 shows that there is no stability."[34] This argument is important for the humane scientific discourse because, firstly, it opposes the official discourse of the concept of protective measures during the rehabilitation period and, secondly it emphasizes that the essence of the scientific humane conception of the consequences of the Chernobyl accident is to recognize and establish consequences and their influence on the territory and its population in a long-term perspective.

At the present stage the human scientific discourse forms Chernobyl to a smaller extent within the frame of the scientific discourse. Chernobyl is more visible in the framework of the discourse of enlightenment and the discourse opposing not so much the scientific knowledge but the activities of the authorities, "Everybody is trying to know less as the less you know the better you sleep. If all people were educated… here we are going to educate people and to show them what it is, what it is for, to teach people to survive in the conditions in which it is possible to survive as not everything is fatal. (…) The authorities believe that they will stay and that it doesn't concern them. Strontium will strike everyone, there are no other variants. I have recently published an article in "Narodnaya Volya" saying that there is no system for the radioactive protection of the population. But we have created this system and we will introduce it. It needs to be put into operation and to protect Belarus. There are ice skating palaces, the library but for whom? (…) There are hollow programs, Gomel Institute of Agricultural Radiology, a medical center. There is a sign post, there is equipment, there is a building but there are no people and no specialists."[35]

The scientific humane discourse is founded, first of all, on the scientific substantiation of the consequences of the radiation impact on man and environment. Hence, the scientific knowledge moves to the forefront in the construction of the discourse about Chernobyl consequences and measures of the Chernobyl policy expressed, as it has been said above, in scientific conceptions. A value-oriented approach is also important in this scientific discourse as it places the care about man, his safety and health into the center of the discourse. The discourse about an acceptable risk and the principle of survival are also among the major arguments of the humane scientific discourse. We should also say that this discourse was formed specifically within the frame of scientific discussions and had meaning only in a certain opposition. As an independent scientific discourse it does not possess any crucial importance for the forming of the Chernobyl policy as up to date it hasn't obtained any institutional support. Due to the state monopolization of the scientific knowledge about Chernobyl an alternative scientific discourse has no possibility of an additional scientific research. That is why the humane scientific discourse finds great support among political parties.

Conclusion

The interpretation of the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant led to a certain division among the scientific community. The Chernobyl policy is based on a complex and complicated scientific knowledge. That is why it is essential for the Chernobyl policy to not only make scientifically grounded decisions but to rely on the body of institutions producing scientific knowledge. In the present context, the "production of scientific knowledge" is nothing but a combination of institutes, laboratories, expert groups, and research projects working out the legitimate knowledge about the consequences of the accident at the CNPP used both to take measures in the field of the Chernobyl policy and to confirm the measures already taken in the same area.

Scientific practices consist not only of the research of facts and revealing of the dependence of some factors on others but also of the creation of a certain idea matrix explaining the functioning and interconnection of different elements and phenomena of both the physical and social world. Scientific knowledge is produced within the framework of the paradigm or constructs a new paradigm. When researching the CNPP consequences scientists from different areas (physics, chemistry, biology, radiology, medicine) tried to identify and explain interconnections between radiation and life ability, a life threat and a safe living. The scientific research of the consequences of the CNPP disaster lies in the field of the identification of the effects of radioactive contamination on health and life ability of people, animals and plants. In such a context scientific knowledge about the CNPP accident consequences forms only two paradigm types such as "safety reversibility" and "acceptability and non-reversibility" of consequences. These paradigms use the notion of "risk" and, more specifically, the situation of uncertainty and a potential threat. These conditional scientific paradigms deal, first of all, with the aspect of impact of radiation doses. In the first case a safe human activity is possible in certain conditions if there are relatively small doses (threshold and normative) while in the second case any and even the most insignificant dose is harmful for any life being and leads to consequences for a safe living.

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Notes

1 Latour uses Plato's "myth about the cave" to identify the origin of this duality of nature and knowledge about nature (society), the world of things and the world of ideas, of the objective and the subjective and where "the scientist" has the right "to come out of the cave" and learn the truth of things, to possess the highest political power, "to make the silent world speak, to tell the truth and not to discuss it and put an end to endless debates in the form of the indisputable authority of the knowledge about things" (Latour, 2004, p.28).

2 In this case Latour uses the allegory of "bald" things and "hairy" things (2004, p.38). Latour talks about the crisis of objectivity and more specifically about the emergence and growth of the so called risk combinations ("hairy things") and what Beck defines as the uncertainty and inability of science to explain certain phenomena or, in other words, what was simple and understandable becomes dangerous and complex (Neprikosnovenny zapas. N2 (46). 2006. http://magazines.russ.ru/nz/2006/2/).

3 This concept was elaborated in 1989 by the vice-president of the AS of the USSR L.A. Ilyin during the period of development and preparation of the first state complex program for 1990-1995 to liquidate the consequences of the accident at the CNPP. The concept set a limit permissible life dose that equals 35 rem.

4 It was accepted at the meeting of the Bureau of the Presidium of the AS of the BSSR December 19, 1990.

5 It was approved by the Head of the State Chernobyl Committee of the Republic of Belarus I.A. Kenik 06.07.94.

6 It was accepted by decree N 650 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus November 30, 1995.

7 It was accepted by the National Commission of Belarus on Radioactive Protection, protocol N 16, April 20, 1995.

8 It was accepted by the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus 19.11.1998.

9 It was approved by the Head of the Committee on Problems of Consequences of the Accident at the Chernobyl NPP at the Council of Ministries of the Republic of Belarus V.G. Tsalko in 2002.

10 An off-system unit to measure effective and equivalent doses. 1 rem = 0,01 Sv. A biological equivalent of an x-ray.

11 Ilyin L.A. Radiatsija: chto bylo, chto budet // Gomelskaja Pravda. 13.04.1989. S.3.

12 A unit to measure an effective and equivalent dose in the system Sv. The most commonly used submiltiple unit of Sievert is its one thousandth or millesievert. 1 sievert (Sv) = 1000 millesieverts (mSv).

13 Interview of A.L. Ilyin "Radiatsija: chto bylo, chto budet" (Gomelskaja Pravda. 13.04.1989. S.3).

14 Interview of A.L. Ilyin "Chernobyl i budushchee" (Chyrvonaja zmena. 12.08.1989. s.7).

15 Interview of A.L. Ilyin "Chernobyl i budushchee" (Chyrvonaja zmena. 12.08.1989. s.7).

16 Interview of A.L. Ilyin "Chernobyl i budushchee" (Chyrvonaja zmena. 12.08.1989. s.7).

17 Interview of A. Guskova, a corresponding member of the Academy of Medical Sciences of the USSR (Chyrvonaja Zmena.12.07.1989).

18 Interview of L. Astakhov, deputy director of the Scientific Research Institute of Radioactive Medicine of the Ministry of Health Protection (Chyrvonaja zmena, 12.07.1989).

19 The archive of the Supreme Council, N 968, list 1, case 2145 "Record of the 12th session of the Supreme Council of the BSSR of the 11th convocation October 25-27 1989 about the State Program of liquidation in the BSSR of the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl NPP for 1990-1995", p. 167-168.
Only during the second half of 1990 the government of the USSR formed an inter-departmental commission consisting of 60 people headed by the academician of the AS of the USSR S.T. Belyaev. The main aim of the commission was to work out "principles and criteria in support of practical measures aimed at the elimination of potential negative consequences of the Chernobyl accident for the health of the population and compensation for the damage caused". In 1991 the government of the USSR approved a new "Concept of residing of the population in the regions affected by the accident at the CNPP". In accordance with this concept the minimum intervention level equal 1 mSv of the annual average effective equivalent irradiation dose was set for all territories that were radioactively contaminated. Protection measures are taken if the interval of doses is from 1 mSv to 5 mSv per year and dwellers have the right to a voluntary relocation from this territory. Chernobylskaja katastrofa / Main editor academician of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine B.G. Barjahtar. K., 1995.

20 Lepin G. Respublike nuzhna razvetvleyonnaja set' "chernobylskih" lechebnyh uchrezhdenij // Narodnaja gazeta. 24.01.1997.

21 "Concepts of protection measures during the rehabilitation period for the population residing on the Belarusian territory radioactively contaminated as a result of the Chernobyl accident" (from the personal archive of Astrid Zam).

22 Comments of the group of scientists, Zbarovsky, Lepin, Mal'ko, Nesterenko, December 21, 1995, p.3 (from the personal archive of Astrid Zam).

23 "Concept of protection measures during the rehabilitation period for the population residing on the Belarusian territory radioactively contaminated as a result of the Chernobyl accident".

24 Speech at the seminar "Role of mass media in covering the events connected with the Chernobyl accident", Minsk, November 14, 2008.

25 Address of the President of Belarus to the participants of the International conference "Chernobyl 20 years later. Strategy of reconstruction and sustainable development of affected regions", http://www.president.gov.by/press10819html#doc.

26 Speech at the seminar "Role of mass media in covering the events connected with the Chernobyl accident", Minsk, November 14, 2008.

27 Speech of the deputy Kashperko at the 12th session of the Supreme Council of the BSSR. The archive of the Supreme Council, N 968, list 1, case 2145 "Record of the 12th session of the Supreme Council of the BSSR of the 11th convocation October 25-27 1989 about the State Program of liquidation in the BSSR of the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl NPP for 1990-1995", p.52.

28 Naviny belaruskaj akademii. 21.09.1990. S.2.

29 "…the limit of irradiation which cannot exceed 0,1 rem (1 mSv) per year. The identified limit of irradiation should be reached step-by-step: in 1991 0,5 rem (5 mSv) per year; in 1993 0,3 rem (3 mSv) per year; in 1995 0,2 rem (2 mSv) per year; in 1998 0,1 rem (1 mSv) per year." The concept of residing on the territories contaminated with radionuclides as a result of the accident at the Chernobyl NPP approved by the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the BSSR in 1990.

30 A zone of alienation is the zone of resettlement in 1996 surrounding the territory of the CNPP; the zone of mandatory resettlement is the territory with the density of soil contamination with caesium-137, strontium-90 and plutonium of 40,3 and 0,1 Si/sq km accordingly; the zone of resettlement is the territory with the density of soil contamination with caesium-137, strontium-90 and plutonium from 15 to 40 and from 2 to 3 and from 0,05 to 0,1 Si/sq km where the irradiation dose of a man can exceed 0,5 rem/5 mSv/ per year; the zone with the right for resettlement is the territory with the density of soil contamination with caesium-137, strontium-90 and plutonium from 5 to 15, from 0,5 to 2 and from 0,01 to 0,05 Si/sq km where the permissible level of population irradiation exceeds 0,1 rem/1 mSv/ per year; the zone of living with a periodical control is the territory with the density of soil contamination with caesium-137 from 1 to 5 Si/sq km while the permissible irradiation level cannot exceed 0,1 re/1 mSv/ per year. The concept of residing on territories contaminated with radionuclides as a result of the accident at the Chernobyl NPP approved by the Academy of Sciences of the BSSR in 1990.

31 The concept of safe living, 1990.

32 Interview with Astrid Zam. Minsk, 16.11.07.

33 "Concept of main protection measures for the population residing on the Belarusian territories contaminated with radionuclides" developed by a group of scientists headed by prof. Nesterenko. From the personal archive of Astrid Zam.

34 The review of prof. Nesterenko V.B. (without the date), comments of the group of scientists (Zbarovsky, Lepin, Mal'ko, Nesterenko) on December 21, 1995 (from the personal archive of Astrid Zam).

35 Interview with Nikitchenko. Minsk, 17.10.07.

Natalia Baranovskaya

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PRECONDITIONS OF ACCIDENT AT THE FOURTH POWER UNIT AT THE CHERNOBYL NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Almost a quarter of a century has passed after the accident at the fourth power unit of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. In the course of time the consequences of the event that occurred on April 26th, 1986 showed that it is the largest technogenic catastrophe in the history of mankind. The necessity to study the accident's lessons is obvious. However, these lessons take root not only in the failure that turned into a humanitarian accident for certain regions, but also in various social and political preconditions that generated technical problems which in their turn led to the disaster. The reader is offered the first ever historiographic attempt to understand the accident's preconditions.

The social development in the second half of the 20th century in the USSR was characterized by a number of different processes including those which later received a rather ambiguous evaluation. Among them one could name the rapid development of nuclear physics. Its achievements were used both for military and peaceful purposes not only in the USSR but also all over the world. It is clear that over the past decades the attitude to this branch of scientific and technical progress and results of its embodiment into the economic life has changed drastically and become mostly negative. However, there was a period in the history of the Soviet state when the Soviet propaganda machine instilled the feeling of confidence and absolute exclusiveness of such achievements in the population. The country's main pride was putting into operation the Obninsk nuclear power station (nowadays it belongs to the Russian Federation). The plant in Obninsk became the first-ever pilot industrial nuclear power plant with the capacity of 5 thousand kW. The first nuclear power station in Great Britain was put into operation only two years later in 1956 while a similar plant in the USA was brought into service in 1957.[1]

Since the 70s of the 20th century almost all technologically developed countries of the world focused their national programs of nuclear power development on the use of certain types of a nuclear power plant. Today there are about ten basic types of nuclear reactors in the world. In the USA, for example, the main types of nuclear power stations are equipped with boiling reactors and water reactors with water under pressure while Canada prefers to use nuclear power plants with heavy hydrogen reactors etc. All of them have got a high safety level. The USSR chose to follow a different path by saving on safety.

The construction of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant began in 1970[2] in quite peculiar conditions. They were assessed later after the plant failure during the session of the operative group of the CPSU Central Committee Political Bureau on March 16th, 1987. When reporting to the main state party body branch experts who analyzed the work dealing with the creation of a new generation of safe nuclear reactors emphasized that the majority of countries pay primary attention to the safety features of such reactors. A detailed analysis of design and specifications of operating and prospective nuclear steam generating installations was thus carried out. Measures to increase the reliability of such stations were being worked out while necessary research and design work were also being carried out quite intensively. All these measures allowed to start the designing of essentially new equipment which thanks to its physical and heat engineering characteristics had a high safety level. The document issued stated that no similar analysis had ever been made in the USSR while the development plan for 1987 was not executed. Attempts to organize such work had a one-time unilateral character. There was no branch program developed. The experimental base of the scientific, design and project organizations did not meet modern requirements. The document also contained another conclusion stating that it was possible to move to the regular construction of nuclear plants of a new generation only after the completion of their design and equipment development. A negligent attitude to this requirement resulted in the commissioning in 1987 of power units with water-moderated water-cooled reactors (WMWC-1000) the re-design of which demanded urgent completion.[3]

Such was the situation after the failure at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant (CNPP) while it was even worse before 1986.

During the construction of the CNPP the RBMK-1000 reactor (a high power channel reactor) was used. The developers of this reactor type highly praised positive characteristics of their "child" emphasizing essential advantages of channel reactors in comparison with tank-type reactors (WMWC). At the same time the creators of the RBMK model stressed that uranium-graphite reactors have certain drawbacks, in particular, they require both high labor and material input during the construction and installation phases. The reactors should also have a bigger main case. At the same time RBMK creators did not even mention the issues of reactors' reliability and safety level.[4]

On the whole, the attitude to RBMK-1000 safety before the accident was quite careless. The official assessment of the energy giant was as follows, "Reactors do not explode", "RBMK is a samovar", "Nuclear power plants with RBMK can be placed in the city centre". At the same time there existed quite an opposite opinion. Ivan Zhezherun, a Soviet physi-

cist and former employee of the Institute of Atomic Energy named after Kurchatov, warned about the possibility of an accident at RBMK reactors in general and, hence, at the CNPP due to the drawbacks in its design 11 years prior to the disaster. Zhezherun's understanding of "the achievements of the Soviet science" led to his being forced out from the team. He was also declared a mentally inadequate person.[5]

However, despite the aversion at the state level of the alternative points of view regarding the design features of RBMK along with a departmental approach and closeness for criticism of state and scientific bodies called upon to solve the problems of quality and safety of nuclear engineering some industry experts continued their analysis trying to understand the problem. So, in 1985 A.A. Jadrihinsky, the inspector of the State Nuclear Energy Supervision Department of the USSR at the Kursk nuclear power station, published the work "Nuclear safety of RBMK reactors". He sent it out to the industry top supervising bodies. His work described dangerous situations which could arise during the operation of RBMK-1000 in connection with their constructive and technological features. A.A. Jadrihinsky came to the conclusion that "design documents and official reports of the Scientific Supervisor and the Main Designer contained no clear substantiation of the nuclear safety condition of RBMK reactors".[6]

The Soviet Union realized its nuclear program, in particular, the program of nuclear engineering, being a member of the world community of nuclear states. In 1957 the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was created by the decision of the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization. It was the first international organization in the world that dealt with the issues of the peaceful use of atomic energy. According to its statute the main task of the organization was the achievement of a fast and wide use of atomic energy. Nevertheless, the IAEA and its head Hans Blix, guided by branch patriotism and departmental interest, when assessing the disaster and its possible consequences, played an extremely negative role in the destiny of the population.

As it has already been noted, the USSR used uranium-graphite channel reactors at the first generation nuclear power stations. The energy of such reactors is released during the division of kernels and is then turned into heat and, subsequently, into electric energy. The general designer of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant was the Institute "Gidroprojekt" (that should immediately arouse suspicion as hydro and nuclear power stations cannot be similar in designing!). The main designer of the reactor installations was the scientific research design institute of energy techniques while the scientific supervisor of the project was the Institute of atomic energy named after Kurchatov. The construction and installation of the CNPP fourth power unit were supervised by the Ministry of Energy of the USSR. The plant consisted of the first and second modules (two power units per each) having a common ventilating block and a block of auxiliary systems of reactor equipment under one roof. Experts stated that the configuration of the plant's second module that included the notorious CNPP fourth power unit was executed in an absolutely different way in comparison with the configuration of the station's first module and similar blocks of other nuclear power plants.[7]

RBMK reactors similar to those at the CNPP were also in use (and are still being used though after the reconstruction) at the Leningrad, Kursk, Smolensk and Ignalina nuclear power stations. According to the data collected at the beginning of 1995, there were 15 power units with the reactors of this type operating in Russia while the construction of one more was being planned.[8]

In connection with the fact that world atomic engineering has chosen other reactor types the question arises why the USSR preferred RBMK reactors. When answering it, experts always emphasize that uranium-graphite systems using the water cooling function are the simplest and most technologically accessible. Certainly, RBMK reactors or as the developers called it, "the Soviet national type of the reactor", had certain advantages highly praised in the conditions of the Soviet economic model allowing to get the maximum effect at minimum investments. For example, this type of reactor required less enriched fuel. That was economically advantageous. It was also possible to reboot the heat producing assemblages (TBC) without stopping the reactor. At the same time the reactor did not require a heavy case. The former chairman of the State Committee on the use of atomic energy of the USSR A.M. Petrosyants claimed that the absence of a heavy case frees the factories of heavy mechanical engineering from manufacturing steel products weighing up to 200-500 tons.[9] Experts also believed that the absence of a steel protective case was another great advantage as it allowed to eliminate the restrictions on the capacity of a separate block. The common opinion was that it was possible to standardize the reactor's sections and to erect reactors of any capacity using blocks. The approach began to be implemented. The reactor, 2-4 times more powerful than the Chernobyl one, was developed while they also started to develop a reactor that was from 4 and up to 8 times more powerful than the CNPP. Fortunately, these projects were not realized.[10] However, the pursuit of economic gain and simplified exterior design also had its underside, namely, the absence of a uniform case which, in fact, meant the absence of an additional barrier vital for the protection against the emission of radionuclides during accidents. The gigantomania during the reactor designing process led to the creation of huge active zone sizes of the modern RBMK. Its diameter is 12 meters while its height is 7 meters.[11] Thus, it excludes the possibility of building an external protective cover. No other powerful reactor in the world has been built without it.

Another seemingly positive RBMK characteristic turned out to be negative as well. This feature allowed to operate on smaller amounts of enriched fuel that was received after the regeneration (restoration) of used fuel elements from power stations using water-moderated water-cooled reactors (WMWC). Due to the specific physical design features operational emissions of RBMK radioactive noble gases are almost 40 times higher than those of WMWC.[12]

In the light of the above-stated the experts' opinion that none of known industrial objects has ideal characteristics seems to be true. The creation and operation of an industrial construction including nuclear power stations are always in competition with the achievement of a desirable effect and means needed for its achievement. Such a competition proves to be harmful in a long term prospect. Saving on the research on safety and

safety means in the design of the nuclear power plant with an RBMK reactor did lead to the global consequences in April 1986.[13]

Though the top ranking state and industry officials did not doubt the safety of achievements of scientific and technical progress at the end of the 70s and the beginning of the 80s of the 20th century. For this reason even before the accident at the CNPP the Ministry of Energy of the USSR and the Council of Ministers of the USSR discussed the necessity to build the second module of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant just 11 kilometers away from the existing one. Naturally, after the events of 1986 this idea met strong resistance in Ukraine. However, a formal reason to refuse the construction was that the designing of new atomic power stations is done by the Ministry of Energy of the USSR but the Ministry does not have the approved prospective scheme for the placing of atomic power stations. Such a scheme should take into account a whole complex of ecological and economic questions connected with the development of nuclear power engineering.

The certificate provided by the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine regarding the potential construction of the Chernobyl atomic power station II near Kiev with its population of more than one million contained a long list of arguments against the project. In particular, the document describes a complicated water economic situation in the pool of the river Dnieper. It was also specified that the placing of the station in this area would require removing about 3,5 thousand hectares of woods while the construction of a pond-cooler with the area of about 3 thousand hectares could cause flooding including the reclaimed territories. The document also emphasized that the construction of a new station was planned in the area that already had a surplus of electric power. At that time the world practice had no examples of a nuclear power plant built with more than four power units on one platform. The document contained a number of reasons as well as the conclusion about the extreme inadvisability of the CNPP – II construction and the inadmissibility of carrying out such an experiment near the city of Kiev. It is remarkable that this document was dated March, 1986, and was registered in the general department of the Administrative office of the Council of Ministers of the USSR on May 29th. This serves as an evidence of attempts of the Ukrainian experts to resist that course of nuclear engineering development which was forcefully imposed on by the central authorities.[14]

An integral component of the social and political preconditions of the events at the fourth power unit of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant on April 26th, 1986 is the working life of the personnel which actually began with great hopes in 1986. Four power units of the first and second modules operated at a high capacity. The construction of the third module (blocks 5 and 6 with reactors RBMK-1000) was being completed and the construction of the fourth module (blocks 6 and 7 with reactors RBMK-1500) began. Soon the station was to have become the most powerful in the world.

However, operating engineers were concerned about blocks 3 and 4 which lagged behind the blocks of the first module in their electric energy production. The problem to increase the energy production to the planned level was not solved. Obviously, it was for this reason that the Ministry made a decision to carry out an experiment at block № 4. The

experiment was aimed at solving the problem of the increase of energy production in the active zone without changing the parameters of the block. It was a pure physical experiment in the reactor itself; therefore, all the data about it in the existing and functioning system were classified as secret. Such state of things in the branch was absolutely normal and did not raise any objections.

Due to the fact that at the end of April block № 4 was supposed to be stopped for the planned repair, the preparation and carrying out of the experiment in the active zone were connected with this event.[15]

On April 1st, 1986, when block № 4 worked at the designed capacity of 104,7 % and nominal 102,6 %, the preparation for the experiment in the active zone (A3) began. The fact sheet about the fuel reboot in the reactor and change of parameters of the active zone throughout April 1-23rd allowed technical experts to identify the purpose of the experiment and the methods for its carrying out. They calculated that the preparation period ended April 23rd when the capacity was made 102 % nominal, and parameters in the active zone (A3) corresponded to the experiment program. A group of scientists appointed to carry out this experiment arrived at the CNPP from Moscow that same day. Due to the secrecy of the work, the experts were present at the station incognito, communicating with a limited number of the personnel. Nevertheless, in the memoirs published in 1998 in Moscow the employees of the Institute named after Kurchatov specified who came and when, where each visitor stayed, what the visitors did and when they left (the date of departure).[16] This fact refutes the official statement that the personnel had not co-ordinated the actions with the reactor designers who themselves were present at the CNPP and would not allow the personnel to do anything without their permission.

However, the plant was not ready for the stopping of block № 4 and experiment and test on April 25th. Not all the process participants arrived at the plant while some of the technical issues remained unsolved. The director of the plant V.P. Brjuhanov* spent two days trying to convince the Ministry to move the date of the stopping of block № 4.[17] But the experiment in A3 was more important and thus the director signed the order on April 24th which was not even typed in time.[18]

Conclusions about the justification of claims against the plant director and personnel in connection with the accident at the fourth power unit can be made on the basis of the work of experts who analyzed the project documentation of the second module of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. The analysis showed that there were serious drawbacks in the creation of a reliable and highly effective automated control system of the management of the power units of the nuclear power plant equipped with RBMK. It is quite difficult to

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* After the accident V. P. Brjuhanov was continually accused. His former colleague G. Medvedev supported the official policy writing about it in his "Chernobylskaja tetrad'" ("Chernobyl Notes"). However, in his long short story "Ekspertiza" ("Examination") written before the accident he said, "The director of the Chernobyl NPP is my good old friend, my former boss and colleague. He could in any situation pull himself together and like the most powerful computer produce the only correct decision".

speak about a high reliability of the general control system of the power units. The volume of the automated managerial processes was extremely low. OPB-88 (General provisions of maintenance of safety at nuclear stations) define the requirements to monitoring systems and management of the nuclear plant block as follows: it should be constructed in such a way as to provide favorable conditions for the personnel to make correct decisions regarding the management of the nuclear plant and to minimize the possibility of wrong decisions. So the main function of management, especially that of decision-making, is delegated by the major branch standard document to the personnel with the introduction of the concept of "the minimum amount of wrong decisions". [19] Thus, the developers of the principles of management of the block and its safety, obviously, without realizing it placed all guilt in an extreme situation on the plant's personnel.

When summarizing some of the results of the analysis of the social and political preconditions that generated technical problems which in their turn finally led to the largest technogenic accident of the 20th century, we should, first of all, mention the totalitarian political system in the USSR that created absolute power and ideological monopoly of the centre. The feature of ignoring alternative ideas, knowledge, offers and thoughts that is inherent in the totalitarian system, led to the feeling of confidence and being absolute correct in some people and indifference in others who understood the impossibility to influence this or that situation. Formation of negligence and paternalist moods in society was a logical component of this chain. Extrapolation of similar moods and attitude among all components of public and industrial life regarding such a difficult and dangerous problem as the development of nuclear science and techniques, and in particular atomic engineering, caused constructive and technological defects during the designing and construction of the RBMK nuclear power plant. Some defects were identified during the preparation of the standard documentation while certain drawbacks became obvious during the training of the operational personnel all predetermining the accident at the fourth power unit of the CNPP.

In fact, the information about it that has become accessible recently provides ground for more specific conclusions. It is essential to speak about the extreme closeness of nuclear science and practice, departmental monopoly on truth, aversion of criticism and alternative points of view. It is clear that the judgments in this sphere should be made by branch experts. Tragic experience of the CNPP showed that there are discussions among experts and the majority is not always right. The following conclusion may seem banal but only specialists should be engaged in atomic engineering. CNPP designers included experts in hydro constructions. The construction, installation and operation were assigned to the Ministry of Energy of the USSR which dealt with thermal and hydroelectric power stations. Experiments during the designing of the first and second modules, gigantomania and a pursuit of economic gain to the detriment of safety along with the division of functions between various departments during the process of designing, building and operating in such a complicated branch as atomic engineering along with many other things require a thorough analysis as it led to the epoch-making event the consequences of which mankind will still feel for many years to come.

Notes

1 Yadernaja entsiklopedija. M., 1996. S.193.
2 The first module (blocks 1 and 2) was put into operation in 1977-1978 while the second (blocks 3 and 4) was commenced in 1981-1983.
3 See: Yaroshevskaja Alla. Chernobyl. Sovershenno sekretno. M., 1992. S.540-541.
4 Dollezhal' N.A., Emeljanov I.A. Kanalnyj yadernyj energeticheskij reactor. M., 1980.
5 Shabad Steven. Regional Report: The Soviet Union-Still at Risk? // World Press Review. 1988. 10.01.
6 See: Chornobylska tragedija. Dokumenty i materialy. K., 1996. S.58-59.
7 Belyaev I.A. Beton marki "Sredmash". M., 1996. S.14.
8 Yadernaja entsiklopedija. S.194.
9 Citing: Lvov G. Chernobyl: anatomija vzryva // Nauka i zhizn', 1989. N 12. S.9.
10 Ibid. S.10.
11 Yadernaja entsiklopedija. S.194.
12 Nauka i zhizn'. 1989. N 12. S.10.
13 See: Vsestoronnyaja otsenka riskov vsledstvie avarii na CHAES // Obshchee izdanie Ukrainsk-ogo nauchno-tehnologicheskogo tsentra i Ukrainskogo radiologicheskogo uchebnogo tsentra. 1998. S.2-2.
14 Pravitelstvennyj arhiv Ukrainy, f. P-2. op.15, spr. 218, str.48-49.
15 See: doc. N 51, 53 in the book: Chornobylska tragedija. Dokumenty i materialy. S.74-77, 78.
16 Moskva – Chornobylju. M., 1998. Kn., 1. S.518, 529.
17 Brjuhanov V. P. Iskuplenije chuzhih grehov // Komsomolskaja pravda, 2000. 26 April; interview in the newspaper "Fakty", 2000, 18 October.
18 See: doc. N 51. Chornobylska tragedija. Dokumenty i materialy. S.74-77.
19 OPB-88. Obshchie polozhenija obespechenija bezopasnosti atomnyh stantsij. PN AEG-1-011-89. Rozdil 4.4., p.4.4.10.

Alexander Dolgovsky

STATE CHERNOBYL POLICY AND WRITTEN PROTEST OF BELARUSIAN POPULATION IN 1986–1991

Introduction

Public activities of the Belarusian National Front (BNF) as well as "Chernobyl marches" which have been and are being organized by it in Minsk, the capital of the BSSR/Belarus, are both considered to be examples of public mobilization processes in Belarus and abroad. The present article is used to analyze the development of public mobilization processes after the Chernobyl accident in 1986-1991 in the province. The Gomel region has been chosen as an example to be compared with Minsk on the basis of citizen appeals and official state documents.

First of all, it is necessary to define the role of appeals in the Soviet Union. According to the Soviet legislation the concept of the appeal included offers, written requests, and complaints. Offers were understood as citizens' recommendations not connected with the infringement of their rights. Requests were treated as petitions for the satisfaction of legitimate rights and interests which did not concern the rights of the applicant. Finally, complaints were seen as messages about the infringement of the rights of the petitioner.[1] This article considers only those letters which are connected with the infringement of rights and interests, namely, requests and complaints.

Appeals should be seen as an important element of the USSR state system. They had a multifunction significance in the Soviet legislation. For instance, the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR from April 12th, 1968 stipulated,

> "*[...] appeals of citizens to the state and public bodies with offers, requests, and complaints are an important means of realization and protection of the rights of a person, strengthening of the relations between the state machinery and the population; it is also a valuable source of information neces-*

> *sary to solve current and perspective questions of state, economic and social and cultural construction".*[2]

The Communist party attached special significance to the organization and development of the appeal system of the Soviet citizens to state and public bodies. The Soviet institute of appeal underwent dramatic changes from a simple right to present a complaint to the developed system of appeals on the legislative level and found its proper place in the Constitution. The overall objective of the given institute was to regulate the conflicts between the state and its citizens. Writing an appeal provided Soviet citizens with a legal possibility to solve various conflict situations in a non-public way.[3] At the same time it provided the state with an additional opportunity to control society and anticipate the emergence of critical publicity. It is possible to assume that such a system hiding the problem questions of the Soviet system and preventing them from becoming widely known played an important role in forming idealized notions about the Soviet system and beliefs in the absence of conflicts of the Soviet system among the USSR citizens.

This article analyzes appeals as an important source of information as well as their quantity and requirements stated in them are treated as indicators of public mobilization, formation of protest and transition from a passive to an active protest. The underlying thesis of the article runs as follows: the accumulation of appeals and unresolved problems described in them led to an active mass protest. This thesis will be examined on the example of the Gomel region which suffered the most in comparison with Minsk, the capital of the BSSR. Main issues to be analyzed include such questions as how the population self-organized itself, what goals it pursued, who/what was the driving force, and finally, how the state reacted to those processes and how it responded.

State Chernobyl Policy in 1986-1991

What processes defined the state Chernobyl policy and which ones did not do that and why?

In his speech at the extraordinary plenum of the CPSU Central Committee on March 11th, 1985 and one year prior to Chernobyl accident M.S. Gorbachev expressed his opinion,

> *"The better people are informed, the more consciously they operate and the more actively they support the party, its plans and program goals".*[4]

It is obvious that the informing of the Soviet population was co-ordinated with a new policy of acceleration of the country's social and economic development. Despite it already in his first public statement on the Soviet TV in connection with the Chernobyl accident on May 14th, 1986 M.S. Gorbachev declared:

"As far as the "lack" of information is concerned and all the hype surrounding it, especially that of political content and character then this is a non-issue".[5]

The second statement of the glasnost' proclaimer in the first speech made two weeks (!) after the Chernobyl accident causes justified disappointment. M.S. Gorbachev goes on business trips to different cities of the Soviet Union to carry out an advertising campaign of a new perestroika policy. He makes speeches and meets workers and peasants in various regions of the USSR but does not visit the regions which suffered after the Chernobyl accident. How can one explain such inconsistency? Gorbachev explained his ignoring the Chernobyl accident and its consequences by referring to the lack of information connected with the typical Soviet secrecy surrounding atomic engineering. However, such interpretation only partially explains the absence of glasnost' there where it was supposed to be expected.

Perestroika started with the acceleration of the country's economic development. Glasnost' was initially assigned an economically predetermined and fragmented role. All other forms used to present the policy of openness frequently turned into undesirable accompanying effects. Glasnost' opening the truth about the accident at the CNPP (Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant) could threaten the new acceleration policy. Thus, from the point of view of the economic development acceleration strategy the policy of concealing the Chernobyl accident and its consequences should be considered caused by economic reasons. Thus, the Chernobyl accident was instrumented by the state both in its internal and foreign policy. While for the sake of the country's internal policy the mobilization and liquidation of accident consequences with the help of considerable manpower resources was presented through heroic deeds and as an advantage of the Soviet socialist system by propaganda then the foreign policy strategy used the Chernobyl accident to stop the race of arms with the purpose of acquiring the financial assets necessary for the policy of economic acceleration through the reduction of military expenses.

Finally in 1989-1991 the results of the new policy turned out to be opposite to the set goals. The economic goals of perestroika were not reached; moreover, perestroika led to the crash of the Soviet Union economic system. Glasnost' became an uncontrollable process which to a great extent caused the political and ideological collapse of the USSR. The Chernobyl accident thus became a perestroika's litmus piece of paper while at the same time it also served as a certain catalyst that accelerated the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

Formation and Activity of Groups of Appeal Writers in 1986–1989

The analysis of appeals connected with Chernobyl issues allows to identify three groups of appeal writers during the period from 1986 till 1989, namely: 1) a group of the evacuated population; 2) a population group from the radioactively contaminated territories, and 3) a group of regions with "a favorable radiation background".

1. The first group of appeal writers included the evacuees and temporarily evacuated population taken away during the state evacuation activities from May till October, 1986. The group consisted mainly of the agricultural population. The conducted evacuation identified the existing real threat to the health of the evacuees which they could probably hardly recognize and/or understand independently. It generated different problems which served as a reason to write numerous appeals. The chairman of the KGB of the BSSR in the report "About the situation with the population on the territories of the BSSR which were radioactively contaminated" for the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia July 30th, 1986 reported,

> *"[...] the situation among 20 thousand persons temporarily resettled remains quite complicated. The uncertainty about the permanent place of residence, the terms of possible re-evacuation and returning of children, the incomplete household well-being generate various negative moods and cause a number of complaints including collective appeals to different bodies".*[6]

The problems of the evacuated population also included finding the members of the families remaining on the contaminated territory, the fear for the future of the families along with accommodation issues connected with the evacuation.[7]

The collective evacuation, frequent joint placing and residing in various sanatoria and camps in the course of evacuation activities accelerated the process of this group's quick self-organizing needed to solve the arisen problems with the help of a legal written protest. A great number of letters during that period was written on behalf of mothers and parents. Collective complaints mentioning legal infringements became a symbolical means of communication with the authorities in 1986.

Addressees of appeals included every possible state body from a regional, district, and republican executive power agency and a party committee to such state institutions of the whole Union level as the Committee of the Soviet women and children, national newspapers, and Secretary General M.S. Gorbachev. The choice of republican and all-Union institutions was quite frequently explained by the growing population distrust of the district and regional heads. So, the district management was represented in a negative light and defined as incompetent. It did not evacuate all members of the family, and first of all, men. It also forced men to take part in agricultural activities as well as in the construction of houses on the radioactively contaminated lands.

Writers of appeals also expressed their distrust of mass media. The reason for it was the discrepancy between the presented information and real events. In other words, the affected population caught mass media lying. For instance, those not having a possibility to be evacuated and leave the workplaces were presented as volunteers and members of the Communist party and Komsomol by the regional radio.

The women, being the moving force of this group, were ready to act and showed it. They threatened to appeal to such international organizations as the International Atomic

Energy Agency, and warned the addressees about the group's unwillingness to move with the children to the new houses if the houses were constructed on the contaminated territories. The women were ready to re-settle independently in the areas with a favorable radiation situation following the examples of other families.



Harvesting on radioactively contaminated territory of the collective farm "Star" of Elsky district, Gomel region in 1986 (Source: BGAKFFD, O-131312).

We shall treat the mainly rural evacuees who became self-organized for the legal written protest, namely for the writing of appeals as one of the first forms of post-Chernobyl mobilization. This group possesses the authorship of the overwhelming majority of appeals concerning Chernobyl problematic in 1986. The evacuated population formed an unstable critical group focused on solving specific material problems while political goals were not pursued then. It was characterized by the belief in the highest party elite and strong state capable of solving all the problems. It was this belief that at that time was a barrier for the people's active protest.

Due to the active catastrophe management the state managed to solve the general problems of the evacuees. This group received payments, indemnifications, and new flats. Consequently, the number of complaints sent in 1987-1988 considerably decreased. The problematic of appeals in 1987-1988 mainly dealt with an insufficient compensation, low quality design work of new houses/flats, and unemployment in new places of residing.

2. The second group of appeal writers was formed by the population residing on the radioactively contaminated territories that was not evacuated and lived outside of the 30-kilometre re-settlement zone. The biggest part of Gomel and a number of Mogilev and Brest areas were among the most affected areas.

The second group was formed under the influence of a number of external factors such as the evacuation by the regional heads and doctors of their own children; the above men-

tioned mass evacuations in May – September in 1986 both in Byelorussia and Ukraine; the inflow of the evacuated population, and the overcrowded hospitals, etc.

The first collectively organized authors of appeals of the second group wanted the state to pay attention in 1986 to their problems. They also wanted to be recognized as a victim group justifying their demands and mentioning their life and work on the radioactively contaminated territories, the offers of the military men to expand the zone of evacuation, considerably higher numbers of the evacuees in Ukraine etc. The female representatives of this group were especially active. The female/parental topics expressed in their care of children and their food were present in many letters.

Appeal authors presented themselves as being well informed about the radioactive level. Not completely excluding the possibilities of the population being informed by military men and doctors we shall nevertheless treat this information as a tactical method used by the appeal authors to convince the addressees of their having the knowledge of the real situation and thereby push the addressees to solve the identified problems. At the same time the writers of letters were frequently under the influence of various gossip caused by lack of information due to the official policy of hiding the consequences of the Chernobyl accident. The petitioners also expressed their mistrust of mass media in view of the distorted description of the accident consequences.

The presence of numerous state commissions and justified loyalty in relation to the highest Union bodies gave this group the hope of the coming improvement and attention of the state to the emerged problems.



Member of the bureau of the CPSU Central Committee E.K. Ligachyov during his visit to the town of Bragin in the Gomel region in 1988 (Source: BGAKFFD, O-131314).

The group was watching the situation expecting the state to take measures and waiting for the promised normalization.

In 1987-1988 due to new external and internal factors (the aggravation of the economic situation; the long-term non-solving of supply problems; the flight of experts; payments to

the people with "a favorable radiation level" going to the regions with a high radiation level for short-term employment; the deterioration of the health of children and adults caused or not caused by the consequences of the Chernobyl accident) one could observe further self-organizing of the population on the contaminated territories. Labor collectives served as the basis for such self-organization. Those collectives represented the interests of such professional circles as collective farmers, teachers, doctors or even whole cities. That could be treated as the public mobilization on the basis of trade and place of residence. Still the purpose of mobilization was a legal written protest. Petitioners wrote collective complaints to various regional, republican, Union bodies and newspapers making different social and material claims. Some of them wanted to be evacuated, while others demanded monetary compensation, improvement of food supply, and increase in the duration of holidays as a form of indemnification for residing in radioactively contaminated areas. Political goals were still not pursued.

3. The third group of appeal authors was made of the population of the regions with "a favorable radiation level", i.e. the least affected after the accident at the CNPP. Minsk could serve as an example of such a group. In 1986-1988 this group mainly emphasized national and historical aspects. Chernobyl problematic was of secondary importance and was mentioned only by separate intelligentsia representatives. It is necessary to name writer Ales' Adamovich addressing M.S. Gorbachev and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia. Those addresses should be seen as a private struggle of the writer against the Soviet bureaucracy and clannishness in science during a specific time period.

Authors of Minsk appeals raised such issues as the preservation of environment. They spoke against the construction of a nuclear power plant near Minsk positioning themselves as Minsk public. Minsk population letters also addressed the issue of additional remuneration for working in the radioactively contaminated regions. Such requirements were put forward by students and soldiers in the summer of 1986. Upon the failure to fulfill the given requirements some refused to continue work or even returned to Minsk. Such reactions should be interpreted as the determined participation in the state mobilization processes to liquidate the consequences of the failure at the CNPP. There were also frequent appeals not to send young people to radioactive regions. Petitioners tried to receive flats in Minsk for their relatives from the radioactive regions putting pressure upon the addressees by threatening to write to such international organizations as the International Atomic Energy Agency and the United Nations.

This group was in general indirectly familiar with the problems of both the evacuated and the population living on the radioactive territories. This group's representatives experienced no problems with food supply but they were afraid to use the agricultural products from the radioactively contaminated areas. This group frequently saw the state mobilization for the liquidation of the accident consequences as an opportunity of additional earnings. At the same time there were cases of civil disobedience among those working in radioactive zones. A special anxiety was caused by the construction of the nuclear power

plant near Minsk. In 1986-1988 Minsk appeals were written both individually and collectively and were devoted to solving specific material or environmental problems.

On the whole, all three groups formed spontaneously as a reaction to this or that situation. They were characterized by the absence of a permanent organizational structure and existence for the collective written protest. When the goal was achieved the groups came apart.

Groups of Appeal Writers in Active Protest in 1989–1991

During the period from 1989 till 1991 the number of appeals increased and could be compared with the amount of letters sent by the evacuated in the first months after the Chernobyl accident. The Supreme Council, deputies, various republican and all-Union newspapers, and television became the main addressees. The letters contained such words as glasnost', public control, deputy, etc. The majority of appeals of that period were written by the representatives of the second group, namely, the population non-evacuated from the radioactive zones. This group felt deceived as many promises of various state commissions and experts were not kept. The group ceased to be loyal to the highest state institutions. Collectives of employees from the contaminated regions formed strike committees demanding to make public all the information about the consequences of the Chernobyl accident, social justice, public control, and making higher party officials responsible, etc. The demand of the population to declassify the information about the consequences of the accident served their purpose of legitimizing their material claims to the state.

Chernobyl problems which had been accumulated and not solved through legal written protests became the topic of public discussions. The written protest was combined with an "illegal" public protest in the form of meetings and strikes.

Among others the reasons for the active protest include the deterioration of the children's health[8] in the conditions of limited possibilities of health improvement; economic problems connected with the aggravation of the situation with food supply; the fear of local agricultural production as well as the flight of ordinary people and experts from the contaminated regions, etc. The complex of problems characteristic of 1986-1988 became even more acute in 1989 due to the publication of the map of radioactively contaminated regions, the first partially free elections, the forming of a public discourse about the consequences of the Chernobyl accident, the removal of security classification from accident consequences, and numerous critiques in mass media. In 1989 Chernobyl meetings and strikes took place in Narovlya, Hoiniki, Bragin and other regional centers. The first "Chernobyl March" was organized in Minsk by the BNF on September 30th, 1989.

The Belarusian National Front became more active in Gomel area as well. In 1990 Gomel became the main protest centre of the regions which suffered most from the Chernobyl accident. A considerable part of Gomel's industry went on strike which became the main form of protest.

Thus, it is possible to draw the following conclusions.

Mass appeals in 1986 did not lead to any active protest because through legal written protest the evacuated and mainly rural population managed to resolve conflict situations.



Procession "Chernobyl March" along Lenin Avenue in Minsk September 30th, 1989 (Source: BGAKFFD, O-137909.)

Unresolved material problems, satisfied demands of the evacuated population, remuneration to the personnel working in the radioactive zones led to the self-mobilization in 1987-1991. It was done by the population of the contaminated areas by working collectives united by professional and residential principles with the determination and promotion of a wide complex of social and economic, ecological and political demands to the state by giving it a wide publicity through an active protest.

There was no written protest in Minsk during the period from 1986 to 1988 which could be compared with that of the contaminated regions. The active protest in 1989-1991 was the result of the articulation of Chernobyl problematic and its use by the Belarusian National Front for political purposes as well as the deterioration of the economic situation.

Notes

1. Compare: organizatsija i dokumentirovanie raboty s predlozhenijami, zajavlenijami i zhalobami grazhdan. T.V. Kuznetsova i dr.: M., 1982. S.3-4.
2. From the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR "About the order of considering offers, appeals and complaints of citizens" April 12, 1968. Yadevich N.I. "About the order of considering offers, appeals and complaints of citizens". Minsk, 1983. S.5.
3. The system exists and is being improved in modern Belarus.
4. The speech at the extraordinary session of the Central Committee of the CPSU March 11, 1987: Gorbachev M.S. Izbrannye rechi i statiji. M., 1987. T.2. S.131.
5. The address of the Soviet television May 14, 1986: Gorbachev M.S. Izbrannye rechi i statiji. M., 1987. T.3. S.395.
6. NARB, f.4p., op.157, d.57, s.117-118.

7 Many appellants saw evacuation as a real chance to obtain a flat in different towns of Belarus and other republics of the Soviet Union.

8 In this sense the children were seen as biological measurements of radiation as the deterioration of the health of children was an indicator of increased radioactivity.

Anastasia Leukhina

STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT OF ECOLOGICAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN UKRAINE AFTER CHERNOBYL ACCIDENT: TENDENCIES AND PROBLEMS

The delay with the notification about the dangers of the Chernobyl accident and the ignorance of the party and state management had far-reaching consequences not only for the health of the population but also for the further political development in Ukraine after the declaration of its independence in 1991. Even after the receipt of sovereignty by Ukraine Chernobyl did not turn into a smaller "social catalyst". It was quite the opposite. The newly created free space which did not exist in the days of the Communist party management now became opened for communication and mobilization. The concern and involvement of citizens into the process of solving environmental problems became the driving force in the destruction of the state controlled monopoly of policy in the former Soviet Union through the mobilization of social movements at the beginning of the perestroika period (CP Sahm, 1999; Arndt, 2008). The accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant led to an earlier unknown sensitivization and mobilization of big groups of people, especially in the USSR that was greatly affected. "The environment degradation aggravates social resistance and social movements."[1] In their turn these social movements acting as agents of changes later influence the society development on the whole and the environment in particular.

"Immediately after the failure and during the first years after Chernobyl the mass consciousness" was infected by Chernobyl's hysteria. Everything that occurred to the people or around them was interpreted as a consequence of the Chernobyl disaster. In the course of time since the second decade after Chernobyl the acuteness of that tragedy gradually decreased, first of all, due to the economic difficulties, the deterioration of the well-being, the unemployment and other problems of the transition period... The consecutive decrease in the importance of the Chernobyl issue was not so much the result of the

successful liquidation of the consequences of the act of nature but the result of actualization of other social problems".[2] It is important to analyze how this tendency is reflected in the activity and development of the ecological civil movement in Ukraine.

Post-Chernobyl Society: Sociopolitical Context for Development of Ecological Movement

It is symbolic that "Chernobyl is associated with slyness, crash, and, in essence, a full bankruptcy of the Soviet system. It became a unifying push to mobilize the people against that system".[3] The major factors influencing the development of a civil society in general and the Ukrainian ecological movement in particular include the following: (a) the compulsory change of a way of life of the population caused by the Chernobyl accident, (b) the growing discontent of the population with the social system, and (c) the political novelty in the form of mass political protests, glasnost' and creation of a new multi-party political system.

Smelzer believes that a structural pressure or contradiction arise as a result of the social conflict of interests. Civil movements appear when the discontent with the social system reaches a certain level. Smelzer states that this discontent is the result of an objective event or situation which can drastically change the way of life of the population or generate new standards used by the people to evaluate events or situations.[4] The compulsory change of the population's way of life occurred due to several reasons, mainly, due to the deterioration of health and quality of life, the growing radiation risks, and a very low level of people's knowledge about how to survive in new sociopolitical and ecological conditions after the accident.

After the disaster at the CNPP the people faced physical and psychological problems of adaptation to the new environment such as congenital defects, be it cancer or radiation sickness as well as a posttraumatic stress disorder. The social and economic conditions also worsened because of the economic stagnation, the decrease of the standards of living, the economic liberalization and disintegration of the state financial system. According to Janitsky, in a post-totalitarian society the concern of the population about the environmental condition, a dense settling on ecologically risky territories and an obvious threat to health and way of life play an important but not a critical role in the emergence of the ecological movement.[5] Despite the fact that Janitsky critically assesses the role of these factors in the formation of the ecological movement, some public figures when talking about the social movement origin noted that it is exactly the fear of spreading of a peaceful atom and the desire to save oneself and a young generation from ecological accidents that became the basic motives in the self-organizing of the public around ecological issues.

The absence of truthful information about the environment condition on the whole and consequences of the Chernobyl accident in particular were causing indignation and stimulated individual and collective actions focused on the acquisition of the access to the information concerning its consequences for the people and environment, as well as the pressure upon officials to solve local environmental problems.

During perestroika the new standards of glasnost' were introduced. It essentially affected the activization of the civil activity "from below". Solchanik specifies that "the first appeal to form a mass civil organization to spread the ideas of perestroika which reached a wide audience was made by Pavlychko at the ecological meeting in Kiev organized by several "informal groups" in 1988.[6] In 1991 "Zelyony Svit" ("Green Light") organized an independent civil Chernobyl investigation which provided a legal evaluation of the reasons, circumstances and consequences of the Chernobyl accident. The conclusions of this investigation were opened for the public. The policy of glasnost' created space for heated discussions and public campaigns regarding various ecological issues. This new experience of a public discourse became a key mechanism in the forming of "green networks" and structural differentiation of the movement".[7]

Changes on the political arena did not go unnoticed for the ecological movement. "The mass political protest created a mass ecological movement which was quickly becoming politicized."[8] After the Chernobyl failure green slogans became very popular; therefore, many democratic leaders used them in their political struggle. The movement for independence, the political novelty of a "green" ideology and a new multi-party system were important factors in the ideological and institutional development of the ecological movement.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union and disbandment of a considerable quantity of scientific research institutions earlier financed by the state a whole army of unemployed specialists filled the labor market. These intellectuals became the founding environment for the development of new social movements. Many of them became the key assets necessary to ensure a long-term institutional development of nature protecting non-governmental organizations. In the mid-eighties, except for the "state" society of environment protection students' nature protection teams were created with the purpose of improving the protection of environment and ecological monitoring. Stegnij[9] believes that the volunteer experience in such teams was crucial for the acquisition of the administrative skills necessary for the setting up of the first ecological NGOs. "The mental potential accumulated in the Soviet society demanded social actions".[10] This need for a social action poured out in the form of mass protests, new political movements and waves of the civil activity "from below".

Ecological Movement: Dynamics of Development

The sources of the ecological civil action in Ukraine originated in 1946 when the first Ukrainian society of wildlife management as a branch of the all-Union society of wildlife management was created. Initially, the members of the organization included well-known representatives of intelligentsia while later officials of different levels from different official bodies were also involved in the agency's activity. As the public participation in the making of ecologically significant decisions was impossible it was presupposed that the role of the wildlife management society was reduced to the carrying out of information cam-

paigns and the struggle against poaching. The membership in such societies was formal and the members had to pay scanty membership dues. However, this allowed to report a considerable amount of members providing the basic reason to recognize the organization as legitimate and public. It is necessary to keep in mind that the administrative positions were offered only to the high level ministry officials. The so-called public associations de facto operated under the full control of the authorities. Such format of a public association greatly disappointed the general public.

It is impossible to receive descriptive official statistics about the existing ecological non-governmental organizations as the Ministry of Justice does not classify organizations by their activity. Official statistics classify NGOs by the criterion of the organization's regional registration be it international, all-Ukrainian, regional, city, district and registered by means of notification. Having analyzed all the catalogues of NGOs published by ICAP and Creative Centre Counterpart Stegnij[11] offered to use the available statistical data about the chronology of the creation of non-governmental organizations. The main bulk (84 %) of ecological non-governmental organizations created before 2000 were actually founded during the first decade after Chernobyl (1986-1995). The first big ecological organizations included the UEA "Zelyony Svit" ("Green Light") (1987), "Ekologia i mir" ("Ecology and the World") (1988) and "Mama86" ("Mummy86") (1990). The heart of two main political movements (later they were turned into parties) is the National Movement of Ukraine and the Green Party based on the activity and personnel of "Zelyony Svit". "Zelyony Svit" as a public association and the Green Party as a political force functioned on different local and legislative levels.

Andrusevich[12] provisionally divided the post-Chernobyl ecological non-governmental organizations into two groups: (a) a small group of active members whose activity has been directed towards the solving of real problems on the local or regional levels, and (b) organizations for the reform of the government and ecological management. Andrusevich believes that after a certain period of organizational construction and development it is possible to divide the organizations into the organizations of a political and lobbyist character (policy organizations), analytical centers (think tanks) and organizations of local action (grassroots organizations).

The model of the group organizational development developed by Tackmann for the analysis of group dynamics can be used for the description of the development stages of the community of Ukrainian ecological NGOs.

1. Formation (roughly 1985-1995). This stage is characterized by the organization of situational meetings aimed at solving specific problems or promting concrete interests, using available resources of volunteers implying a high level of cooperation and interaction between different groups. At that time the practice of organizing mass campaigns and protest actions against a specific decision or project such as forbidding the construction of new nuclear stations was wide spread. A series of such protests and confrontations created a rather hostile context in the relations of the movement with the authorities. Accordingly, both the movement as a whole and separate organizations in particular needed new ap-

proaches to their work aimed at the survival and self-provision in a long-term prospect. One of the experts emphasized that it was a period of a spontaneous formation of groups of active members and organizations.

2. Storming (or collision) (roughly 1995-2003). The so-called "new wave" of NGOs emerged in reply to the growing streams of the international and technical assistance which helped organizations not only to realize projects but also to expand their institutional potential. "Not mass protests but rather information, administrative skills and political technologies became the end-products of the public activity revival."[13]

Despite the fact that donors aspired to work more and more with professional organizations which were able to supervise grants and introduce projects during that period there were many "one-day" organizations created for the purpose of the development of donor financing. At the same time strategically focused organizations started to actively expand their institutional potential as well as to develop administrative structures and professionalize their activity. Janitsky explained this dynamics in the following way, "While some active members became engaged in their political career, political movements preferred to remain professional".[14]

On the one hand, it allowed organizations to prevent "the brain drain", while on the other hand, high salaries did not always attract those whose personal aims and values coincided with the organization's goals and values. Some NGOs started to look more like consulting agencies than groups of activists. In order to bring the organizational history into accord with donor requirements many NGOs began to be involved in numerous diverse projects. It allowed members of the organization to receive operational experience in different spheres but at the same time it prevented organizations from defining and adhering to long-term strategies and a thematic focus in the organizations' work.

The main wave of financing nature protection projects ended in 2001 when Bush's administration made a decision to re-distribute technical assistance to cover social issues. The level of pressure among ecological community grew due to a tight competition in the market of grants. Many NGOs preferred to carry out projects individually instead of exchanging information or working out network projects with the attraction of other organizations. Some organizations undertook some attempts to create a unique organizational network or structure but they failed mainly due to the absence of clear common goals, internal disagreements, a competition among organizations and leader ambitions. In the conditions of a competition one could observe a number of tendencies as some organizations started to build closer relations with the official bodies, enterprises and political forces while there appeared a number of short-term ephemeral organizations created for the use of the grant money. At the same time the cases of corruption and abuse in the non-governmental sector and donor environment were becoming more and more frequent. It created restrictions for the development of a powerful uniform ecological movement.

Internal squabbles became especially noticeable among Chernobyl organizations. In essence, some Chernobyl organizations were similar to pocket organizations being parts of public authorities (named GONGO by A. Fowler). They were often headed by people

close to officials. They more often than others received special privileges in the form of state financing and benefits. "When trying to split the unity of Chernobyl organizations the authorities relied on the activities of the movement of "the fifth column" or the so-called "Associations of Chernobyl organizations". There are about 180 of such formations in Ukraine including various funds, associations, unions or, to be more exact, little unions as their majority consists only of several people. Many of them receive tons of different kinds of humanitarian assistance and make business out of it, have beautiful offices, and solve their private problems. They are also "very far" from the problems of 3,5 million Chernobyl victims. It is clear that following the orders from above these misters unanimously support any decisions of the authorities directed to the undermining of the social protection of Chernobyl victims. However, their voices get lost in the general chorus of protest."[15]

The level of social communications between NGOs as well as their relations with other interested parties, including the state, are the defining characteristics of the social movement. Oberschall[16] believes that a fast mobilization is impossible if the organization is formed of individual members. It (fast mobilization) becomes possible only when well organized associations of people ready to operate are involved. At the collision stage a number of ecological organizations did not have a sufficient potential for a fast mobilization and well organized activities in the context of the ecological movement.

3. Normalization and performance (approximately from 2004 - till present). Many experts believe that it is the period of professionalization and bureaucratization of ecological NGOs. Others call it the period of "Westernization" as Ukrainian NGOs were more and more aspiring to create working contacts with organizations in the West. A lot of training programs for activists from the NGO management were financed and organized. Some organizations started to apply Western approaches to the management of NGOs.

During the interview of ecological activists conducted by Stegnij[17] in 1995 more than half of the respondents noted the informal nature of their organizations while a similar research in 2005 showed that the quantity of such informal organizations decreased by almost two times. Many of the "old" Post-Chernobyl organizations created during the "formation" established cooperation with donors or budgetary institutions, and it opened possibilities for receiving a more stable long-term financing. At the same time more and more situational activist groups focused on the solving of specific local problems were being created. For example, many such groups got united when fighting against the construction of buildings on the territory of green zones or yards. In his interview one of the experts emphasized that simultaneously more and more youth and student organizations began to initiate ecological projects.

Such dynamics positively influenced the ecological movement as a whole. In the process of evolution the organizations decided to focus their work on a specific problem and to find a niche in the ecological community unlike the earlier spread "universal approach" in their activity. As a result, the level of professionalism of organization members and employees grew considerably while the competition for grants somewhat decreased. Consequently, wider opportunities were created for the unification of efforts of different organizations in

solving certain problems, carrying out wide campaigns, fulfilling national projects, creating networks and activating information exchange between the organizations.

Despite certain positive shifts in the development of the ecological movement in Ukraine, the transition to the stage "Performance" is still going very slowly. The listed problems interfere with the institutional expansion of the movement and its transition to the stage "Fulfillment".

The main obstacles hindering the general organization and movement for the transition to the "Performance" stage include a defragmentation, an insufficient focus and the politicization of the nature protection activity. These tendencies can be analyzed using the example of the UEA "Zelyony Svit".

The association "Zelyony Svit" became a significant platform for a democratic discussion of the most diverse issues starting with environmental problems and finishing with political ideas. It certainly became a new experience for many activists; however, this platform and the organizations which worked within and outside its frameworks lacked a thematic concentration, a professional approach and an organizational sequence. "Zelyony Svit" generated many demanding and critical resolutions on various questions. The insufficient thematic concentration of discussions and a wide spectrum of documents damaged the organization's reputation from within and negatively affected the image of the association among external stakeholders.

"Ukraine's civil society has many problems in achieving public recognition and support because of the agency's tricky following important values."[18] According to the report of Civicus Index Ukraine, the majority of the population considers the role of civil society in the preservation of the environment insignificant, limited or moderated and only 25% of respondents consider it essential.[19] Janitsky believes that "as a result, purposes and values determine the organizational structure of the movement".[20] Hence, unclear purposes and dispersed values to a certain extent explain a high degree of an internal decomposition and the absence of coordination in the ecological movement.

In spite of the fact that in the middle of the ecological movement there appeared different internal conflicts regarding who had to be a formal and informal leader of the movement it is necessary to recollect that various associations and coalitions began their work exactly during this period.

Due to the absence of a clear split between the political activity and ecological activism in the work of "Zelyony Svit" as an ecological movement, and the Green Party faced many difficulties of a strategic character and generated inconsistent representations about their work and efficiency. Moreover, a low productivity of work and lack of a real progress in solving ecological problems during the presence of the Green Party in the parliament negatively affected the reputation of the green movement as a whole. As a result of the absence of consistency in the differentiation between a political activity and a public activism ordinary citizens often associated the Green Party with ecological NGOs.[21] This could be confirmed by the results of the population survey conducted in 1999. The survey results proved that every fifth respondent believed the Green Party to be an ecological NGO.

In Ukraine "social movements were formed in the conditions of the inability of political institutions of the socialist times to comprehend the essence of an independent political activity thus creating favorable conditions for an independent development of these movements. However, the emergence of new political institutions allowed to integrate the leaders of the social movements into new bodies, and, as a consequence, the mentioned movements lost their own political dynamics".[22]

It should be noted that the election of the Green Party to the parliament during the elections in 1998 became a strong stimulus for the expansion and formalization of all-Ukrainian associations, as, for example, the all-Ukrainian Ecological League and Mama86. On the other hand, Stegnij specifies that the ecological movement did not have any significant influence on "the ecologization of political consciousness and electoral orientation of voters".[23] It is reflected in the tendencies of the development of the Green Party itself. After its success at the parliamentary elections of 1998 the party failed to meet the expectations of the voters and continued to lose their trust. Despite the official growth of membership by 41 times (from 2000 members in 1991 to 82000 in 2007) the results of the party at the parliamentary elections continue to worsen (from 5,43 % in 1998 to 0,4 % in 2007).[24] However, it is necessary to keep in mind that the majority of nature protection NGOs during the last three elections deliberately and publicly separated themselves from PZU.

Conclusions

The article analyzes the development of ecological NGOs starting with the time of the Ukrainian society of wildlife management and finishing with the emergence of hundreds of organizationally developed non-governmental agencies. Using Tackmann's model the author follows the development of ecological NGOs at the stages of formation, collision, rationing and performance. Despite certain positive shifts in the development of the ecological movement in Ukraine, the transition to the "performance" stage is still going very slowly. Among the basic problems interfering with the transition of the organizations and movements, one can see a certain defragmentation, an insufficient concentration and the politicization of the nature protection activity.

The decades of one-party discipline and concealment of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster led to an earlier unknown sensitivization and mobilization of big groups of people. The movement for independence, the political novelty of the "green" ideology and a new multi-party system became crucial factors in the ideological and institutional development of the ecological movement.

The major factors influencing the development of a civil society on the whole and the Ukrainian ecological movement in particular, include the following: (a) a compulsory change of the population's way of life caused by the Chernobyl accident and disintegration of the USSR, (b) a growing discontent of the population with the social system, and (c) a political novelty in the form of mass political protests, glasnost' and creation of a new multi-party political system.

A compulsory change of the population's lifestyle was connected with the deterioration of health and quality of life and the growth of radiation risks. The social and economic conditions worsened as well due to the economic stagnation, an increase in the level of poverty, an economic liberalization and disintegration of the state financial system.

The absence of truthful information about the environmental condition and consequences of the Chernobyl accident led to the feeling of indignation and stimulated individual and collective actions directed to receiving the access to the information about the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster for the people and environment and the pressure upon officials to solve local environmental problems. This new experience of a public discourse became a key mechanism in the formation of "green networks" and a structural differentiation of the movement.

The author expresses her gratitude to Melanie Arndt, Natalia Baranovskaja, Anna Golubovskaja-Onisimova, Dmitry Skrylnikov and Alexander Stepanenko for their invaluable contribution and support in the preparation of this article, and also to Volkswagen Fund and to the Potsdam centre of historical research for their support of the present research.

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Tatyana Kasperski

BODY, POPULATION AND HUMAN LIFE IN POST-CHERNOBYL POLICY IN BELARUS

Since the times when the power took upon itself the function of managing life <…> the former right to make die or save life has been replaced by the power to make live or reject into death.

Michel Foucault

For almost a quarter of a century the Chernobyl accident has not ceased to be the object of numerous and inconsistent interpretations concerning both its cultural and sociopolitical value as well as its physical, biological and medical consequences. In order to see this it is enough to look through the evaluations of these consequences presented in numerous reports of various international organizations and groups of scientists published in different countries on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. For example, the report of the so-called Chernobyl forum[1] insists that the previous estimations of human losses as a result of the Chernobyl accident presented by different mass media, scientists and politicians, have been greatly exaggerated. It is a question not of dozens and hundreds of thousands of victims as it has been stated before but significantly smaller numbers. An international commission of experts cites data about 28 participants of the emergency works who died in 1986 due to acute radiation sickness (ARS) and 15 patients who died of thyroid cancer. According to the commission's estimations, the number of those who died of a radiation-induced cancer out of 600 thousand people who received considerable irradiation doses (liquidators working in 1986-1987, the evacuated and inhabitants of the most contaminated areas) can make up to four thousand people.[2] At the same time the international

ecological organization "Green Peace" gives absolutely different numbers in its report predicting that about 93 thousand deaths from cancer are connected or will be connected with the influence of Chernobyl radiation.[3]

Without setting the task of finding out whose expert estimations more adequately reflect the post-Chernobyl reality we find it important to pay attention to the aspects of reality which are taken into consideration in the course of the evaluation of the gravity of the accident's consequences. In particular, when analyzing the situation in Belarus, we shall identify the variable that has not been explicitly articulated but that, however, in one way or another is taken into account in all calculations of the damage caused by the accident as well as when assessing the safety of residing on the contaminated territories. The meaning of this variable is the position taken in relation to the value of human life and human health.

Modern scientific knowledge does not provide us with reliable ways of exact measurement of risks connected with the effect of radiation on a human body. The perception of the damage for health and human life and "human expenses" connected with the ionizing radiation influence, is developed within the limits of a corresponding political and cultural system and a fortiori depends on it. The same can be said about scientific norms and principles serving as the basis of the post-accident policy.

Today most experts on radiation safety agree that there can be no guaranteed safe dose of radiation and one cannot neglect the probability of the impact of negative biological consequences on a human body of any and even the smallest radiation dose. It allows to speak about the so-called *Linear non-threshold concept (LNC)*. The international commission on radiation protection (ICRP) consisting of independent experts recognized in this area unequivocally insists that as any influence of radiation can be connected with some risk level, it is necessary to try to avoid any unjustified influence while any justified influence should be as minimum as reasonable and practically achievable[4] taking into consideration economic and social factors. At the same time norms and limits underlying the principles of radiation safety in a concrete context cannot be based exclusively on scientific knowledge about the influence of radiation on the health of a person but also on the calculation of economic and social expenses and benefits from this or that action taken for radiation protection.[5]

The problem of the political power thus consists in evaluating a considerable amount of factors and risks connected with this or that level of irradiation and benefits from a corresponding intervention measure. Moreover, the defining of intervention threshold means the recognition of an admissibility of a certain risk level and potential negative effects of radiation on a human body. This level depends on the economic and technical capabilities of the state to provide protection against radiation, against political and social priorities as well as how valuable human health and human life are for a specific society. Thus, discussions about an admissible threshold of irradiation directly reveal specific features of the modern political power that, as Foucault asserted, is the biopower, namely, the power which object of influence is the life of man as a biological being.

Value of Human Life in the Context of Post-Accident Emergency Situation

More often than not political authorities aspire to set the norms the observance of which they are capable of enforcing. At the same time one should take into account available political, economic, social, technical, scientific and other resources as well as the desire to use them to provide the maximum safety of life and health of the people. This conditionality of norms is most distinctly observed in emergency situations and crises the presence of which is characterized by the fact that the political and social system in its attempts to preserve the integrity and relative stability experiences difficulties in opposing various sorts of threats and dangers.[6]

As the legitimacy of any power to a great extent depends on its prospective ability to protect the community then it becomes important in crisis conditions to support, at least, the image of the power capable of taking necessary and fast decisions and keeping the situation under control. That is why the norms and principles established in the post-accident period should promote the transformation of a crisis situation into an apparently supervised and controlled one. This visibility can be created more successfully and with smaller expenses for the state if the already existing social and cultural representations about the values of human life and health can assist in this and if the state control of scientific institutions is effective while there are fewer possibilities and resources for an independent expert appraisal.

The evolution of the norms established by the Soviet authorities directly after the explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant allows to trace the development of similar strategies of crisis management. As Adriana Petrina demonstrates in her analysis of the first measures taken to deal with the accident consequences the basis for the made decisions was not so much understanding the danger of radiation's impact but rather the availability or absence of technical means for the measurement and prevention of this influence and readiness to use them.[7] During the first months after the accident the threshold of the admissible irradiation dose was accepted as a rather high one both for the population living on the contaminated territories and for those urged to participate in the so-called "liquidation" of the disaster consequences. Irradiation risks for the health of a person were considered to be insignificant or even absent for lower irradiation doses. Whatever the objective scientific reasons brought by the efforts of the Soviet scientists were used to justify those norms the main task of the norm setting was to provide the Soviet authorities with a possibility "to ensure the provision of technical solutions to the problem of the political disorder".[8] The authorities managed to significantly decrease the scale of intervention relying on those norms. They managed to limit the number of evacuated people and to change the terms of evacuation. At the same time in the conditions of sharp deficiency of the necessary technical equipment the authorities did not hesitate to use human resources in their struggle against the spreading of radioactive contamination. In other words, the norms allowed to turn people into "bio-robots" as liquidators often called themselves as

they were subjected to a high radiation dose in the first months after the accident and their bodies and lives were used for the solution of technical problems.

By the end of 1988 official experts responsible for the scientific substantiation of the post-accident policy offered to consider as an officially admissible total dose of irradiation of 35 rem accumulated during 70 years. The dose was defined within the frame of work done by the experts when they were trying to solve the tasks of the medium-term management of the consequences of the CNPP accident. The radiation levels not exceeding this limit did not require any special measures of intervention directed on the protection of the population from radiation. The experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency who came to the Soviet Union to render scientific and technical assistance to the Soviet scientists approved the 35 rem conception referring to the absence of scientifically confirmed data about the effects of radiation influence with levels lower than 35, 50 and even more rem accumulated over the period of 70 years that corresponds to an average life expectance. Taking into consideration business factors and, in particular, the cost of resettlement of hundreds of thousands of people, the setting of a 35 rem threshold was believed to be reasonable. When justifying the 35 rem conception, academician L.A. Ilyin heading the National Commission on Radiation Protection in the USSR declared:

> "If we start to search for theoretical predictions of future deviations from the spontaneous levels of illnesses at the expense of radiation impact then we will see that be it 50, 35 or 20 rem it will not be possible to identify differences between them. I have already spoken about it. That is why, when offering and developing any concepts, it is still necessary to remember the economic feasibility or how much it will cost to move 20 thousand, 50 or 200?"[9]

Thresholds and norms imposed by the official Soviet science were not exposed to any public criticism until the second half of 1988. Then during the period of Gorbachyov's reforms, the declaration of glasnost' and expansion of protest movements in the republics of the Soviet Union, a group of scientists of the Academy of Sciences of the BSSR sharply criticized the official 35-rem conception. The insufficient respect to the value of human life was used as one of the main arguments against the official norms. So, the scientists from Belarus insisted on taking into consideration not only the scientifically proved effects of radiation but also possible though not precisely identified effects. The scientists asserted that in the conditions of scientific uncertainty concerning the consequences of influence of small radiation doses it is morally inadmissible to use the inhabitants of the contaminated territories as objects of research experiment. That is why, regardless of the expensiveness of resettlement and large scale measures of radiation protection for the state the Belarusian scientists insisted that it is crucial to do it for the sake of life and health of the people living in the affected regions. M.V. Mal'ko, one of the authors of the Belarusian concept of residing on the contaminated territories instead of the official 35 rem explained,

> "… In general, science for the first time faced the case of chronic irradiation of millions of people with small doses. Accordingly, now there is no possibility for an exact estimation of the harm to the health of the population of the affected areas. To make such estimations one needs a long-term research in the areas which suffered from the accident. […] What is to be done? To carry out a long-term observation of the life of the population of the affected territories without using any active measures of radiation protection as the concept of "dose limit for life" demanded or to go into huge expenses to take various actions as demanded by the Belarusian concept. It seems to me that only the second approach has the right to life. It is impossible to make experiments on people."[10]

These arguments of the scientists have formed the basis for the legitimating of requirements put forward by the protest nationalist movement led by the Belarusian Popular Front opposing the communist country leaders. The nationalist movement leaders pointed to the three-year concealment of the true scale of Chernobyl consequences identifying it as "radio-genocide" of the Belarusian people. Though Belarusian nationalists could not come to power the ruling elite of Belarus was compelled to begin the realization of a number of reforms which the opposition insisted on. In particular, it was seen in the acceptance of the conception of the Belarusian scientists and in the establishment of much stricter norms in the sphere of radiation and social protection of the population and the norms which were considered to be really respecting the value of a human life and health.

After the disintegration of the USSR the republic took the path of nationalization, democratization and market transformations. Expensive reforms were accompanied by huge expenses connected with the resettlement of the people from the contaminated territories and the payment of indemnifications to the victims along with the economic losses caused by the radioactive contamination. However, in due course when as a result of presidential elections in 1994 A. Lukashenko came to power the reforms were noticeably slowed down and even partially suspended. It should be said that even before the presidential elections the country's executive bodies undertook attempts though generally unsuccessful to reconsider the Chernobyl legislation and earlier accepted humane norms of residing on the contaminated territories. The attempts were aimed at the acceleration of the return to the normal life in the areas which suffered from the accident consequences and cutting down the budget expenditure for the realization of Chernobyl programs on the whole and the payment of allowances to the victims in particular.

Soon after the elections A. Lukashenko offered a new approach to the management of consequences at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. That approach drastically differed from the former state policy. The measures taken in the early nineties were declared to have been excessive, rash, violent and even harmful. The official post-Chernobyl discourse now appealed to the restoration of Chernobyl lands and return of the people to their native places. A new turn in the post-Chernobyl policy allowed the state to leave the deadlock in which the state had found itself trying to solve the problems connected with the contami-

nation of a considerable Belarusian territory with radioactive deposits. In fact, the state turned out to be incapable of providing worthy conditions of living to the moved population and to pay the whole amount of indemnifications to those living on the contaminated territories as well as to other categories of the population who suffered from the Chernobyl accident. For example, during the period between 1991 and 1995 the expenses to solve the problems caused by the accident's consequences made no more than 15 % of the total sum of the social and economic damage connected with the disaster for the same period.[11]

When justifying the necessity to introduce a new approach to the solving of the Chernobyl problems Alexander Lukashenko managed to find a positive interpretation of the state's inability to properly protect those who suffered from the accident. Henceforth, the Belarusian people were urged to cease to be passively reconciled with the accident's consequences and loss of land, dwelling and work. Belarusians had to become the owners of their own life and fight for the overcoming of the tragedy. The revival of Chernobyl lands became a slogan of the new policy the underside of which was the neglect of numerous risks for the health and life of the people living and working in the contaminated regions.

As far as the scientific explanation of a new policy is concerned since 1995 a number of documents which justify a gradual reduction in the protective measures for the population and underline the necessity of the strengthened economic and social rehabilitation of the suffered territories have been signed. Among the most important ones we could name "The concept of protective measures during the regenerative period for the population living on the territory of Belarus radioactively contaminated as a result of the Chernobyl accident" approved by the National Commission on Radiation Protection in April, 1995, "The concept of residing of the population on the territories contaminated with radionuclides and development of the settlements located on those territories" approved by the Academy of Sciences of Belarus in November, 1998, and "The concept of rehabilitation of the population and the territories which were affected as a result of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant" developed in 2002 by the Committee on Problems of Consequences of the Accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant.

The policy of the revival of Chernobyl lands received active support from the representatives of the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency which, appealing to the demographic statistics, insisted that the previous estimations of the consequences of the CNPP accident were inadequate. Actually, if one looks at the main indicators of death and illness rate in Belarus that suffered most from the accident the risks connected with the residing on radioactively contaminated territories look insignificant in comparison with the damage caused by the consumption of alcohol and smoking, unhealthy eating style and poverty. How does the demographic approach to the post-Chernobyl reality define the attitude to the value of an individual human life?

Individual Lives versus Demographic and Social and Economic Safety

As Michel Foucault demonstrated in his analysis of biopolicy the modern power treats a separate individual, first of all, as a population element. The biopower is carried out at the level of the whole population and is aimed at the optimization of collective chances for the survival and the greatest possible increase in the collective labor seen as the common riches. If the power of a traditional sovereign is the power to execute or pardon the citizens then the modern power is the power to support and control life. It is the power that aspires not so much to kill but to regulate death rate.[12]

How does the political economy of the population that suffered from the Chernobyl accident in Belarus look from this point of view?

The post-Chernobyl policy carried out by the authorities when defining the admissible risk and, thus, the value of life of separate individuals takes into account two groups of variables.

The first group of variables can be found in the statistical information about the demographic situation both in the affected territories and in the whole country. The concern about the "demographic safety" is often expressed in numerous official performances. It found its reflexion in such important documents as two national programs on demographic safety and the Law on demographic safety. We should remind that since 1994 the country population has not stopped to decrease as a result of a high death rate and a low birth rate. The National report on the accident consequences published before the accident's 20th anniversary, states that between 1994 and 2004 Belarus lost about 3 % of the population or about 300 thousand people. The most depopulated areas were those which were affected by the accident. For instance, the Gomel region lost about 9% of its inhabitants as a result of death and migratory processes during 20 years (150,6 thousand people) while the Mogilev area lost about 7 % (88,1 thousand people).[13]

Even a brief analysis of the illness and death rate structure of the Belarusian population gives us a chance to better see not only the perception of Chernobyl risks by the Belarusian authorities but also how these risks are perceived by the affected population.

Aspiring to regulate the population at the set level, the power as a rule searches for an admissible average, trying, first of all, to affect those processes and tendencies which bring the most negative contribution to statistics. So, for example, the Belarusian authorities are extremely concerned about a high death rate of the population (especially among men) of the able-bodied age. Among the most frequent reasons are violence and accidents as well as the excessive use of alcohol. Unlike the countries of Western Europe Belarus has got a much higher level of illnesses and death rate connected with a way of life (tobacco smoking, unhealthy eating habits and a lack of physical activity). So, from the point of view of an allowable average it is not the radioactive risks that are the most dangerous problem for the population of Belarus.

One of the most vivid examples of the biopolitical logic practical embodiment is the analysis of the contribution made by oncological diseases to the death rate statistics along with the conclusions about the risks connected with the living on the contaminated territories which can be made on the basis of such statistics.

It is well known that an increased number of cancer is considered to be one of the most probable displays of the radiation impact on the population. However, when comparing the structure of the death rate in Belarus and Ukraine which suffered from the Chernobyl accident and the structure of the death rate in the countries of Western Europe we have to admit that the death rate from malignant new growths is higher in the latter. In fact, both parts of Europe have got two similar significant causes of death including the illnesses of the blood circulation system (BCS) and malignant new growths (MNG) but their correlation differs greatly in the West and in the East. The countries of Eastern Europe have got considerably higher indicators of the death rate from the BCS than in the countries of Western Europe while in comparison with them oncological diseases have a smaller relative density. For example, in 2004 the indicator of the death rate from the BCS and the MNG was accordingly 671,67 and 170,51 deaths per 100 000 of the population in Belarus, 831,55 and 186 in Russia, 807,98 and 162,67 in Ukraine, 145,41 and 177,07 in France and 262,82 and 169,81 in Germany.[14] If at the same time we consider the fact that in the countries of Eastern Europe the age of people dying from the BCS (as well as from accidents) is much lower and cancer is usually the illness of the older population then it turns out that the inhabitants of Belarus have more "chances" to die earlier than "to have time" to fall ill with a radiation induced cancer. Therefore, the biopolitical logic in this situation leads us to the assumption that even if we admit that certain individuals living on the contaminated territories are exposed to a more serious risk to die from a radiation induced oncological illness then at the level of the whole population these risks appear not to be as significant and more than admissible. These few hypothetical individuals "are rejected into death" for the sake of returning the population to the contaminated territories which brings economic gain to quite a big number of other individuals.

The second group of variables used as the basis of the post-Chernobyl policy of population management includes those which correlate with the social and economic well-being. The improvement of the latter is often seen as an effective way of ensuring positive dynamics of the development of the population resources. On the other hand, the demographic safety is considered to be one of the major components of the social and economic safety, and demographic threats are defined as "demographic phenomena and tendencies the social and economic consequences of which have negative influence on the sustainable development of Belarus".[15] As A.Lukashenko once expressed it during his trip to the Vitebsk region, being the least populated area in Belarus, "We should increase the population. Otherwise, there will be factories but there will be no people to work there".[16]

How do the Belarusian authorities aspire to increase "the population – riches"[17] on the scale of the whole state taking into account the consequences of the accident at the CNPP? "The national strategy of the steady social and economic development of Belarus for the

period till 2020" adopted in 2004 gives a clear vision about the logic to which the political economy of population in the post-Chernobyl context adheres,

> "The strategy of the sustainable development of the radioactively contaminated territories should be built with the account of the need to improve the well-being of the population living there on the basis of a complex ecological and radiological and social and economic rehabilitation of the contaminated regions. To reach this goal it has been planned:
>
> – to overcome poverty, unemployment, to increase incomes, rationalize the social protection of the affected population on the basis of the economy restoration on the contaminated territories, to activate an investment activity, to create conditions for the development of small and medium-size business and farming;
>
> – to improve the living and social and cultural conditions of the people residing on the contaminated territories (especially in the countryside), to preserve a historical and cultural heritage;
>
> – to monitor the radiation level of land, water, wood and mineral resources and to preserve the natural ecosystems;
>
> – to introduce new information technologies providing an effective carrying out of the monitoring and a wide access of the population and legal bodies to the information about the radiation situation, to conduct economic activities and to follow the rules of behavior at work and in daily life in the conditions of the continuous influence of small radiation doses;
>
> – to gradually restore the economic potential of the affected regions and, firstly, of the agriculture and forestry with the provision of radioactively safe working conditions and manufacture of "clean" competitive production;
>
> – to carry out fundamental and applied scientific research the results of which will allow to decrease the effect of radiation on a human being and an ecological system;
>
> – to improve the existing normative and legal base for the protection of the affected population and the development of the contaminated regions."

It is obvious that such a sustainable development strategy is, first of all, aimed at the repopulation of the contaminated territories while the minimization of the radiation effect is not seen as a priority of the long-term policy concerning the areas which suffered from the accident. The undoubted importance of actions for the radiation and social protection of the population living in the contaminated areas is constantly emphasized in the official discourse; however, they always seem minor. These measures do not anticipate repopulation and are not its preliminary condition but rather accompany it a posteriori. As the above given citation states, radiation monitoring is preceded by the poverty and unemployment overcoming, the improvement of conditions of life and even the preservation of a historical and cultural heritage. The social protection of the suffered population should be rationalized "on the basis of the economy restoration in the contaminated areas".

So, the people living on these territories still need to "earn" the means they need to ensure their own social security as from the point of view of the state it is irrational to pay social benefits to the inhabitants of the contaminated areas compensating for the harm caused to their life and health as a result of residing in a more dangerous environment. Besides, the affected territories' weaker economic development and the refusal to carry out complete agricultural and industrial activities imply huge expenses for the state. Therefore, possible additional human losses connected with an increased radiation effect on organisms living and working in the contaminated conditions are assumed as less significant for the population on the whole than the economic gains from the repopulation and economic revival of the affected territories. Finally, these human losses are considered, first of all, to be the result of the non-observance by the individuals of the rules of a healthy life style and safe residing on the territories contaminated with radionuclides. These rules and instructions of various bodies and organizations formally responsible for public health and safety place these bodies' real responsibility for possible negative consequences of the influence of irradiation on life and health just on individuals themselves.

Life and Health as a Debt to the State

The policy of the revival of Chernobyl lands does not exclude constant reminders about the dangers of radiation for the people living on the contaminated territories. It is not so much the risks of radiation that are not talked about but rather the political responsibility for millions of people exposed to radiation on the contaminated territories. Since school years they have been explained that:

> "After the Chernobyl accident the residing of people on the territory with an increased radiation level was inevitable. It is impossible to completely exclude in such areas the use of products with a higher content of radionuclides. The population should know and strictly follow certain measures of radiation protection to decrease the influence of these factors on health".[18]

Thus, residing on the contaminated territories is not actually treated as someone's political or economic decision, but rather as inevitability or even as a display of courage, heroism and patriotism. It is impossible to eliminate the influence of a higher radiation level; however, those exposed to it should not do it passively but should fight it by observing numerous rules and norms.

The radiation protection basically consists of instructions and imposition of a number of disciplinary practices which different categories of the individuals affected by the accident should adhere to. Thereby, those living on the contaminated territories turn into objects of the disciplinary power which subjects them to a constant corporal supervision and requires them to follow certain obligatory corporal activities.[19] The power carefully regulates what and how should be used as food, how to prepare and store food products, what

rules of hygiene to follow as well as what to grow, how to behave in the wood and where it is allowed and banned to pick up mushrooms and berries. Besides, there are mandatory medical inspections including the measurement of the received internal dose of radiation from radionuclides acquired through food and breath along with regular measurements of the amount of radioactive elements in agriculture and individually produced products and environment.

On the one hand, such a radiation protective normalization promotes the preservation of the daily control of the power over each individual living in the contaminated regions while on the other, it allows to hide the political responsibility for the accident and management of its consequences. Individuals themselves are responsible for the damage that radioactive contamination causes as not only experts in the field of radiation control but also doctors, teachers and representatives of local authorities do their best to inform the population and explain the rules of radiation safety. Besides, there is a certain change of the vector of problems connected with living on the contaminated territories. These problems are depoliticized and having lost their social acuteness they turn into psychological and adaptation difficulties.

Let's remind that psychological consequences of the accident have been in the centre of scientific and political debates since the end of the 1980s. Soon after the Chernobyl disaster doctors and scientists began to show their active interest in the research of how the psychological health of the population was affected by the condition of uncertainty and threat after the explosion, by various measures undertaken by the Soviet authorities to overcome the consequences of the accident (evacuation, resettlement, dezactivation) along with the necessity to live in the conditions of radioactive contamination for an extended period of time.

In the political discourse the problem of psychological consequences was, first of all, crystallized in the struggle against the so-called "radiation phobia" or a mental disorder connected with the fear of radiation impact not supported by the presence of a real danger. After the accident at the CNPP this term was often used as a designation of the reaction of the population directly affected by the radioactive explosion. The official discourse assumed that the only essential damage to the health of the population as a result of the accident included psychological anxiety and fear. Those who tried to protest publicly against the hiding of the real scale of the catastrophe were often identified as suffering from the radiation phobia.

However, the term was substituted by the term "social radiation and ecological stress". The official report about the consequences of the disaster published in 2006 identified the characteristic features of this particular kind of stress as "the lowering of the level of psychological adaptation, lack of self-confidence, unstable self-appraisal and a pessimistic vision of the future".[20] The fact of living on the contaminated territory is not treated as a problem as it is not the radioactive contamination but the lack of individual adaptation or even desire to adapt to its presence that is a real problem,

"…people run away from problems, do not believe in changes for the better, lose life activity, do not resort to simple but effective measures of radiation protection. As a result, one can see a careless attitude to the existing health risks and this, in turn, decreases the effectiveness of the conducted rehabilitation activities".[21]

Such psychologization of the problems connected with the residing on the contaminated territories quite effectively creates barriers for social and political mobilization required for their solving as it makes one think that they are mainly of individual and psychological nature and demand changes in the individual behavior and taking of certain individual actions aimed at the protection of the people's health.

At the same time such psychologization of the consequences of radioactive contamination does not actually mean that the strict observance of rules of safe living on the contaminated territories is the subject of a free individual choice. Individuals are made aware of the following:

"A long-term stress leads to a psychological discomfort, the deterioration of the health of the people, social apathy, a dependant position and a lack of desire to make efforts to improve one's own situation. The psychological discomfort has become a real social factor influencing the speed of rehabilitation and region development".[22]

In other words, the individuals should help the economic rehabilitation of the damaged territories and thus a healthy life style is seen as a debt one should pay to the state. It is also treated as a mandatory element of what one could identify as "biological citizenship".[23] In his interview devoted to the demographic problems in Belarus deputy prime-minister of the Republic of Belarus Alexander Kosinets emphasizes that the care about one's own health and birth of children is an obligation of every person to the state and the people,

"Many people are careless when it comes to their health and the health of their children and their future. That is why it is important to form an ideology that is able to awake the zest for life and raise the energy of the nation. We are building our state for the people but the people should be for the state. We will require that the people start thinking about their health. We will not allow the citizens of the country leave life for no reason. Even if the death rate annually decreases by 8% and the birth rate increases up to 10-11 persons per 1000 it will be possible to stabilize the existing democratic situation. Nobody has ever solved such a problem in such a short period of time in the world. But we will!"[24]

Thus, though the official Belarusian discourse declares a human life as worthy of care and attention and the state positions itself as "a state with a high degree of protection of life and health of the people"[25] the life of every single individual is not seen as a value per se. The analysis of principles and norms serving as the basis of the post-Chernobyl policy in Belarus shows that a human life is treated, first of all, as a life of a body which should be made most controllable and productive. Specific individuals with difficulties and problems in life find themselves in the center of the power's attention only as units of the population, human and labor resources and the combination of human hours. Their life is valuable as long as it leads to the improvement of the general well-being the evaluation and measure-

ment of which are done according to the earlier agreed procedure and criteria corresponding to the structure of power relations.

It should be mentioned, however, that such a position of power or biopower towards an individual life can hardly be considered something that is typical only of the Belarusian context though the Chernobyl accident and its consequences undoubtedly made more acute the issues connected with the value of a human life by having made them more visible and accessible for analysis. It would seem that exactly in the post-Chernobyl Belarus the social and political understanding of the contradictions and ambivalent attitude of the power to a person's life could become the most actual and needed. However, though it is quite paradoxical, such problems almost never become the topic of a public discussion and are rarely articulated as problems in general.

Notes

1 The Chernobyl forum is an initiative introduced by the International Atomic Energy Agency in cooperation with the World Health Organization, UNDP, FAO, UNEP, OCHA, UNSCEAR, the World Bank, governments of Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine in order to form a uniform opinion about a whole set of contradictory issues such as the consequences of the accident for the health of the population and the need for new research of Chernobyl issues.

2 Heritage of Chernobyl: Medical, ecological and social and economic consequences and recommendations for the governments of Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine // Chernobylskij forum: 2003-2005, Internet access: www.iaea.org/Publications/Booklets/.../chernobyl_rus.pdf, date of access 20.01.2010.

3 Complete version of the "Green Peace" report in English: Chernobyl's catastrophe and its consequences for the human health. Amsterdam: Greenpeace, April 2006, Internet access: http://www.greenpeace.org/russia/ru/press/reports/chernobyl-s-catastrophchernoby, date of access 20.01.2010.

4 We would like to remind about the famous principle of ALARA that was first formulated in 1954 by the National Committee on Radiation Protection of the USA. Its name is the abbreviation of the expression "as low as reasonably achievable".

5 ICRP Publication 60: 1990 Recommendations of the International Commission on Radiation Protection // Annals of the ICRP. Vol.21. 1-3. Pergamon Press. P.99-132.

6 Claude Gilbert. Le pouvoir en situation extreme: catastrophe et politique. Paris: Harmattan, 1992. P.21-22.

7 Adriana Petryna. Life Exposed: Biological Citizens after Chernobyl. Oxford, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002. P.11.

8 Ibid, P.50.

9 Citing Kryzhanouski A. Charnobyl i buduchynya // Chyrvonaja zmena. 12.07.89. S.7.

10 "Predel: uchyonym voevat' – a lyudyam umirat'?" interview with M.V. Mal'ko (Nabat. N 8. April 1991. S.4).

11 Shevchuk B.E., Gurachevsky V.L. Posledstvija Chernobylya v Belarusi: 17 let spustya. Natsionalny doklad. Minsk: Propilei, 2003. S.34.

[12] These ideas were described in Michel Foucault's "Histoire de la sexualité", volume 1, "The Will to Knowledge". M. Foucault writes "One of the greatest novelties in the techniques of power in the XVIII century was the emergence of "population" as an economic and political problem: population-riches, population-labor force or labor ability, and population in balance between its natural growth and resources it possesses. Governments see that they have to do with not just certain subjects or even with the "people" but with the "population": with its specific phenomena and variables typical for it including birth, death, life duration, fertility, health condition, frequency of illnesses, eating habits and dwelling". (Citating the Russian translation: Fuko M. Volya k znaniju (Istorija seksualnosti I) // Volya k istine: po tu storonu znanija, vlasti i seksualnosti / per. s fr. S. Tabachnikova, M., 1996. S.120.

[13] Shevchuk B.E., Gurachevsky V.L. 20 let posle chernobylskoj katastrofy: Posledstvija v Respublike Belarus i ih preodolenie. Natsionalny doklad. Minsk: Committee on Problems of Consequences of the Accident at Chernobyl NPP at the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus, 2006. S.64.

[14] European health for all database (HFA-DB), WHO/Europe, access through the Internet http://data.euro.who.int/hfadb/, date of access 07.03.2009.

[15] To read more about the demographic safety in the Republic of Belarus: Law of the Republic of Belarus 04.01.2002 N 80-3, access through the Internet http://www.bankzakonov.com/d2008/time46/lav46813.htm, date of access 11.03.2009.

[16] Citation from "Prirodny gaz neobhodimo ispolzovat' ekonomno i rachitelno". Access through the Internet http://www.president.gov.by/press10723.print.html, date of access 12.01.2010.

[17] M. Fuko. Volya k znaniju (Istorija seksualnosti I). M., 1996. S.120.

[18] Fatin S.B., Mishkevich M.K. Osnovy bezopasnosti zhiznedejatelnosti: uchebnoe posobie dlya 5-9 (10) klassov uchrezhdenij , obespechivajushchih poluchenie obshchego srednego obrazovanija, s russkim yazykom obuchenija s 11-letnim i 12-letnim srokami obuchenija. Minsk: Adukatsyja i vyhavanne, 2004. S.400.

[19] O distsiplinarnoj vlasti. See: M. Fuko. Nadzirat' i nakazyvat': Rozhdenije tjur'my. Per. s fr. V. Naumova. M., 1999.

[20] Shevchuk V.E., Gurachevsky V.L. 20 let posle chernobylskoj katastrofy… S.63.

[21] Ibid. S.93-94.

[22] Ljudi ne ostalis' naedine s bedoj (Gosudarstvennaja zabota o preodolenii posledstvij avarii na Chernobylskoj AES – k 20-letiju tehnogennoj katastrofy) // Informatsionnyj material. N 4 (29) (dlya informatsionno-propagandistskih grupp). Minsk: Institut sotsialno-politicheskih issledovanij pri Administratsii Prezidenta Respubliki Belarus, 2006. S.9.

[23] Petryna Adriana. Life Exposed: Biological Citizens after Chernobyl. Oxford, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.

[24] "Demografija: vopros zhizni i smerti dlya natsii, ili kak belorussij krest prevratit' v belorusskij plus", interview of deputy prime-minister of the Republic of Belarus Alexander Kosinets to the Belarusian telegraph agency, access through the Internet http://www.government.by/ru/rus_interview20070502.html, date of access 21.02.2008.

[25] Address of the President of the Republic of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko to the Parliament April 14, 2004, access through the Internet http://www.president.gov.by/press10866.html#doc, date of access 22.01.2010.

Igor Bobkov

TO THE EAST FROM THE CENTER: CONFIGURATIONS OF MODERNNESS IN EASTERN EUROPEAN BORDERLAND

In 1994, the publishing house of Stanford University published the book of the American historian of ideas Larri Woolf "Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilisation on the Mind of Enlightenment".[1] The research was devoted to one of the most interesting moments of the European intellectual history. According to Woolf, it was exactly during the Enlightenment epoch that the rupture with the identity of the Christian world took place, and thanks to the new mirror that the intellectuals of that epoch, mainly of French origin, presented to the continent Europe started to identify itself with the ideas of science, progress, and civilisation. Now the new knowledge and the light of reason, instead of Christianity, defined the country's place on the civilisation scale while the scale itself was not so much a *description of reality* but rather an ideological fixing of certain rights and preferences.

Just at that moment (this thesis is simultaneously both a starting hypothesis and a book conclusion) the European intellectuals felt the need for something that was different, for the place that was not absolutely Other being remote in space (as the East) or considerably backward and remote in time (as Africa). It had to be a place that would become a peculiar shadow of enlightening Europe and the place of semi-barbarity and semi-civilization from where the light of reason could look especially advantageous and attractive.

This need led to the birth of Eastern Europe as an image and an intellectual design which was invented by the West and was built into the new modern/colonial hierarchy of the world.

This new image of the territories lying to the East from the zone of Roman-German settlement came to light in a variety of texts which became the object of the American researcher analysis. The texts differ by genre and discourse as they include diaries of casual

travellers, historical treatises, letters, and even private conversations. All of them are united by the discourse of "Eastern Europe".

Having analyzed them Larri Woolf came to the conclusion that we face *the invention* or, more specifically, the creation of a new integrated image for the territories which lay to the East from the civilization zone of the West.

Soon after the publication the scheme offered by Woolf became almost a classic in the West, and a few attempts to criticize it (mainly in the German-speaking world, and, basically, for ignoring German-speaking intellectual production), were left unanswered. The book came out during a certain moment of the intellectual history of Europe when the hopes of the triumphal reunion of the West and the East (Gorbachev's concept *of common European home*) became a thing of the past. As a matter of fact, it was a turning point and the time of the first critical re-evaluations of the relationship between the West and the East of Europe. It was the time when people began to understand that this break has its own moment of birth and its genealogy has not been written yet.

Larri Woolf was the first to summarize general conceptual expectations in the form of an academic bestseller but not the only one. Similar work was conducted in most different areas while corresponding ideas circulated in the second half of the 90s in different disciplines. Among others classical works include the alternative version of the history of Europe by Norman Davis "*Europe. A History*" in which he offered such a narrative of the continent history where the history of the Eastern part is not only a shadow of the West's history but rather occupies a worthy and, what is more important, conceptually different own place.

We have also got a variety of works which concern these or those Eastern European subregions and which certainly were prepared and published irrespective of Woolf though they were based on the same ideas (those of Michel Foucault and Edward Said). The unconditional leader among these subregional problems was the problematics of the Balkans in the second half of the 90s.

In 1995 Bakic-Hayden raised the question whether the discourse concerning the region of the former Yugoslavia is a branch of Orientalism. In 1996 Gourgouris wrote about Greece and connection between the Enlightenment period and colonialism. In 1997 the work by Maria Todorova "*Imagining the Balkans*"was published. The book is a historical research that aspires to trace the birth and development of the discourse of Balkanism where the underlying model is the model of Orientalism offered by Said. Finally, in 1998 Goldsworthy published "*Imagining Ruritania. Imperialism of Imagination*", a work in which the analysis aspires to pass from regional schemes to a certain cultural and social typology.[2]

The Bulgarian *Group on the periphery research* started its activity in the second half of the 90s. The Group leader Alexander Kyosev in his program text "*Self-colonized Cultures*" considers Eastern European societies to be the result of a certain colonial trauma.[3]

All these works do not only have a common research object but also a certain methodological similarity. First of all, they all conduct the analysis of the configuration of knowl-

edge/power in the region relying on Michel Foucault and Edward Said's ideas. Secondly, they offer (de)-constructive understanding of these configurations. Conceptions of imagination, constructing or inventing traditions, nations, communities, and territories turn into key concepts.

Despite this commonness, ideological accents differ as some authors direct their deconstructing pathos *against the centre*, trying to show *the power at work* and to demonstrate how that position of the intellectual superiority that has been characterizing the relation of the centre to the peripheries is born. Others base their ideas on reverse problems as their de-constructivism is directed on the disclosure of the periphery attempts to follow the path once undertaken by the centre. In essence, this de-constructivism should underline the weakness and intellectual secondariness of new projects in comparison with the respectable old time quality of the old ones.

But eventually both the former and the latter lead to a zero result as the riches and variety of identifications, images, and competition of projects on this or that territory, both in the centre, and on the periphery, are seen as dreams of intellectuals and as imagination work and due to that they are disqualified.

The weakness of all this research lies (no matter how paradoxical it seems) in its methodological naivety. The basic concepts are not introduced but rather are presented as ready made and "understandable for everyone". Authors refer not to the methodology but to the predecessors. As a result, constructivism of this kind becomes *methodology for the poor* when a historian (or the historian of the idea) cannot explain how this or that phenomenon appears, how the process of transition from a singular intellectual event to the norm, from the individual to the necessary (Foucault) happens, he takes out an invention model out of his pocket. Thus, what is missed is that the act of the invention or imagining something remains at the level of a singular event and as a matter of fact does not explain anything.[4]

What is not taken into consideration either is that the invention, designing and imagination are different things. The invention and designing are always attempts of rational intervention into reality and placing in reality of something that was not there before as a whole though it used to exist as some material and building parts. Imagination is usually treated as something that was forced out from reality and as something that did not find an appropriate and legitimate place there and that now remains without the basis and is seen as something casual. As Lacan would say designing is always the work of the *symbolical* while imagination occurs at the level of the *imagined* and goes in the opposite direction.

It is insufficient to simply declare today that something was invented, designed or imagined.

One needs to refer *to the things themselves*.

On the one hand, one needs a new analysis of the epoch's cultural archive, a combination of individual intellectual events that happened on this or that territory, and that arose on the crossing point of the intellectual, cultural, social, and political.

On the other hand, one should refer to the system things such as the analysis of discourses, intellectual formations, and social mechanisms of idea functioning.

One needs to work with the whole totality of the epoch.

In order to accomplish this one cannot do without the concept of modernness.

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Woolf avoids the concept of modernness[5] though he refers to a certain intellectual tradition where it is legitimately present, namely, that of Edward Said and Immanuel Wallerstein.[6] Woolf disagrees with Wallerstein elegantly rejecting his whole model of the Eastern European presence in the history of the capitalist world-economy in just one paragraph.[7]

The concept of Orientalism bears the main methodological pressure. The concept was introduced thanks to the book with the same name written by Edward Said.[8] Larri Woolf writes that the processes of the invention of Eastern Europe could be named half-Orientalization and the invention of one's own close "East" but only in a softer form.

Further Woolf addresses the analysis of texts believing that the reference to Said is sufficient for the introduction of the main concept which serves as the basis for the book's structure. It is necessary to keep in mind that the book uses the term *invention* more as a conceptual metaphor than as a concept with certain content: Woolf does not explain anywhere what the invention of Eastern Europe means and what real problem the corresponding processes managed to solve for the West besides the preservation of the "center's narcissism".

Let us compare the content of Orientalism conception offered by Said and half-Orientalism of Larri Woolf.

Said's book *Orientalism* was published in 1978. As the author states, the final version of the text was written in 1975-76 during his being in Stanford's centre of the research of human behaviour and which was also part of a bigger project within the framework of which *Palestinian Question* was published in 1979 and *Covering Islam* in 1981.

In regard to the academic localization in the context of its time *Orientalism* could be considered (and it was considered) as the use of Michel Foucault's ideas (whom Said refers to) in a specific area and could take its place among numerous post-structuralist interpretations. But this did not happen. As a result of certain disciplinary and conceptual displacement *Orientalism* took the place of the classical text in the post-colonial research. Bgabga wrote that it *inagurated the postcolonial field* so it declared the emergence of the very space of postcolonialness. After numerous discussions and translations into dozens of languages (*Orientalism* even became a bestseller in Sweden) in his epilogue to the 1994 edition Said was compelled (referring to Borches) to speak about *Orientalism* not as one book but as a number of books. In fact, Orientalism today both as a book and as a project exists in numerous intellectual, cultural and academic contexts.

Except for a few cases of categorical non-acceptance of the book (mainly connected with the animosity towards the post-colonial project itself) in the West, the reaction of the academic world was quite positive. The criticism mainly concerned methodological inconsistencies (the combination in one research of a complex of post-structural ideas and concepts (the configuration power/knowledge, the concept of discourse) and a Post-marxist

social and critical prospect (the concept of hegemony formulated by Gramsci). However, the value of the project analysis and deconstruction of an imperial/colonial discourse was not doubted.

Edward Said's object of research is Orientalism treated as a discourse and a system of thinking. The first of the possible Orientalism definitions given by Said is quite academic. In this case we deal with an academic discipline (or with a number of disciplines) preoccupied with the East. Irrespective of what aspect of reality this or that discipline studies (such as anthropology, linguistics, economy), without any dependence on a specific country everything is defined as Orientalism.

In spite of the fact that in the twentieth century the term looks a little bit old-fashioned and loaded with the colonialist connotations of the 19th century being the Golden Age of European colonialism, the essence of the phenomenon organically passed to its academic successors as in its academic meaning Orientalism is not so much a mechanical sum of doctrines and ideas but rather a certain type of thinking based on an ontologic and epistemological distinction between the West (Oxident) and the East (Orient).

The distinction itself does not bear any axiological connotations unlike the dichotomy the North - the South based at least on climatic differences while both the West and the East are located on the same horizontal axis and this primary semantic hollowness allows the existence of unlimited semantic efficiency. It also allows to use the opposition the West – the East as the basis and matrix of various cultural and anthropological self-definitions (on the line we-they, ours-somebody else's etc.). However, only when we fill this distinction with axiological, cultural and other meanings and when we start to ascribe certain essence to Orient, only then we enter the power sphere of actual Orientalism.

It means that Orientalism is not based on a simple choice of the East as the object of study or space of potential domination, but, first of all, it is based on the belief that the East is appreciably distinct from the West and this intrinsic difference should be investigated, exposed and registered. The valid subject of Orientalism is not the real East but only the essence of the East. At the same time the attitude of Eastern reality to it is not so important. For the one who knows and controls the essence owns the reality as well.

Along and together with an academic discipline the institutional infrastructure of Orientalism develops as well. In this context Orientalism sees itself as a set of corporate institutions of the West the task of which is to build mutual relations of the control and domination over the East. Since the end of the 18th century the quantity of such institutions has grown dramatically. Throughout the 19th century the percentage of overseas colonies of Europe has grown from 35 % of the occupied territories in the world to 85 %.

It is clear that if one is to supervise such territories it is necessary to have not only power but also knowledge. Political, ideological, cultural, and metaphysical legitimating was needed to legitimize European colonial practices.

Said's object of research is exactly that difficult interlacing of power and knowledge and colonial and oriental institutions and academical and oriental disciplines. Said named this discourse Orientalism. This discourse of Orientalism is not a mechanical combination

of power and knowledge, policy and culture, academic texts and practical actions, and a combination in which each of the parts remains separate and different. One implies not only a tactical alliance and mutual support but rather deep internal mutations of both power and knowledge and their combination turning into something else. When dealing with the discourse of Orientalism we do not deal with a simple degradation of knowledge under the influence of political factors. We do not deal with the chronicle of racist beliefs and ideas ciphered into scientific terms either. We have to deal with the mutation of base principles which till this time defined both a scientific phenomenon and practical policy. Said asserts that as a result of it Orientalism becomes a discourse of imperial domination with its own principles and strategy.

One of such principles is the reality principle. It is essential for both science and politics as they rely on reality, investigate reality, and change reality. However, the East spoken about in Orientalism discourse is not *the real East*, with numerous languages and peoples, history and geography. The East is not an empirical reality. The East of Orientalism is an idea, a design, a principle of formation and reality generation. The main thing in this idea of the East is that it is *not the West*.

At the same time this East invented by Europe that was invented both for Europe and for the East remains inaccessible in its essence. In order to open up this East for the West one needs to have it orientalized. It means that it should be put in a situation of such opposition to the West in which the West would have a possibility, a right and means to dominate over the East.

Images and ideas of the East invented by Orientalism are not only a lie or myths. They certainly concern the reality but the relationship is difficult and ambivalent. Proceeding from the colonial status quo and the situation of real preponderance of the West during a specific time interval Orientalism universalizes this superiority and gives it a metaphysical timeless character. As a result the orientalized East is a priori below the West and is a priori subordinated to the West for such is its essence.

Thus, if one is to summarise the above-said one comes to a number of conclusions.

The imperial discourse placed into Orientalism works through the exclusion, localisation and universalization of time advantages.

One should keep in mind another important feature. Orientalism works through knowledge, applies knowledge, and relies on it. In this sense it is not at all connected with imagination, fantasies and with everything that according to Woolf served as the basic materials at the invention of Eastern Europe.

It is exactly this that becomes the main methodological disagreement between Woolf and Said. Orientalism works through knowledge. Eastern Europe is born in the mode of imagination and fantasy. It is the mode of the excluded.

However, what does "*invention*" mean with reference to fantasy? How is Eastern Europe constructed and what are the purposes of its construction if one can do without knowledge upon its designing? Woolf does not provide any answers. He does not even raise such questions.

Some suspicion arises that when addressing Western imagination, fantasy, and travelers'memoirs, Woolf chooses *inappropriate material*. One should refer to knowledge and scientific discourse if one is to analyze the Orientalization process of Eastern Europe. One needs to analyze those disciplines and models which were used by the West to describe and conceptualize Eastern Europe.

There is one more idea to take into consideration. Both Said and Larri Woolf repeatedly stress that their research is devoted to the Western intellectuals who invented the concept or the image of Eastern Europe but not to Eastern Europe as a reality.

At the same time Eastern Europe was much closer to the center than the classical East and it unconditionally reacted to its status changes.

In this respect the reactions of Eastern Europe intellectuals to the first attempts of the West to build a new modern/colonial hierarchy are a part of the intellectual history *of the whole continent*.

Without the analysis of these reactions Woolf's scheme is not simply incomplete. It simply "hangs in the air".

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Still, Woolf's analysis is immensely important and interesting. It is only that material with which Woolf works that allows to formulate a reverse hypothesis.

Eastern Europe is beginning to be seen as a different Europe. It is seen as an ambivalent space and the place where other configurations appear from those very (modern) components. In this sense Eastern Europe is an original laboratory of modernness where within that same logic (transition from a traditional to a new society) *modern alternatives* emerged.

The theme of modernness inevitably arises upon any attempt to write the intellectual history of the region.

At the same time modernness is understood not so much as one of the historical periods (the New time) but as a certain civilization event that created the Gestalt of the modern world. Europe or the West occupies the centre place in this Gestalt transforming the rest of the world into a province or periphery.

There is a certain tradition projecting the corresponding scheme to the political. economic, social, cultural, and even philosophical spheres. In the political and economic projection it leads to the history of the capitalist world-economy (I.Wallerstein), with its kernel, semiperiphery and periphery, as well as territories which remain (or aspire to remain) outside of the capitalist exchange system. In the social and cultural projection the problematics of national projects and everything connected with them prevails including national states, cultures, and ideologies. The national project together with a corresponding type of society and state represents itself as the basic modern "Utopia" of the West. It is this Utopia that is imposed on the rest of the world as universal. Finally, it is the kind of Utopia that should be overcome during the epoch of late modernness.

The greatest problems and misunderstanding occur during the analysis of the modernness intellectual trajectory, during the identification and analysis of those modernness challenges in the sphere of ideas which the periphery is compelled "to meet and solve". In philosophy there are attempts to identify the intellectual trajectory of Europe and modern identity of the West with universality as such and the universal position of critical intellect (from Gegel to Habermas).

This simple (and the most widespread) scheme of "modernness coming" allows to see Eastern Europe as one of peripheries for which the challenges of modernness became not just a political, economic and cultural, but first of all intellectual shock.

Further logic of peripheralness leads to two variants of periphery reactions to the modernness challenges such as pure reception and acceptance of modernness in historically arisen *Western* forms or resistance resulting in nativism and conservatism.

This binary scheme brought the following results for Eastern Europe:

First. The creation of the catalogue of absence which should include everything that exists in the West and that is not present in the East. This list could explain either the lagging behind or being late of Eastern Europe and actually is a part of the reverse process which is the invention of the West as a certain norm. The Western canon being invented by Eastern Europe for itself is in essence such a standard idea.

Second. There emerges a certain scheme of placing one's own content where all artefacts of the epoch belong either to the progressive or to the backward (re-gressive) ones.

In intellectual history (or the history of ideas) the logic of peripheralness leads to the reception idea as a universal scheme which allows to explain all local trajectories of ideas.

This whole process could be called the process of intellectual self-colonisation if one was to apply Alexander Kyosev's conceptual metaphor. The scheme itself is a result of certain structures of cultural colonialism and intellectual dependence. After all, as this is extremely important for the understanding of Eastern European moving through modernness, the ideology of modernness did not simply fix the civilization breakaway of the rest of the world from the centre. It designed this breakaway itself.

Hence, in the Western imagination the history of Eastern Europe falls to the shadow side of modernness.

The European periphery history can be thus told as a part of history *of a different Europe* and as a part *of the European shadow*.

Such history has not been written yet though we observe its fragments in the most different intellectual movements of the last few decades.

Such history writing creates certain conceptual complexities. It is not so easy to write a shadow history or history of non-presence. It is even more difficult to create the knowledge about non-presence.

When trying to tell a story about the colonized we face strange de-territorialization as there is no such place *in the present* where this story could be placed.

On the one hand, the shadow history is developed within the same time framework as the main history but as a result of certain conceptual substitution it finds out that its

truthful place is in the past irrespective of how this past is called (be it before-modernness, childhood, primitiveness, backwardness … etc.) and what place it could occupy on the mental map (the East, a periphery, a province, or an absence).

The shadow space history of European modernness is not only the history of the oppressed people and unsuccessful nations. This is also the history of nature (?!) which became the first and main object of colonisation. This is a *childhood* history, a *women's* history, and quite possible the *old age* history. This is the history of the overcome (though not surpassed) civilisations and culture types.

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To describe this double work of modernness Walter Mignolo introduced the concept of the *modern/colonial division* of the world.[9]

According to it, one of the European modernness results is *the re-imagination of the world*. The universality identified its borders. European colonies found themselves behind these borders. European peripheries emerged on the borderland of the universal and the local. One of such peripheries was Eastern Europe.

When analyzing the peripheries of modernness we come across the fact that the object of the analysis is quite paradoxical. As a matter of fact, the European modernness re-imagines the world dividing it into the centre and the periphery. Consequently, we can speak about the peripheries of modernness not as a natural norm of the epoch but as a result of modern practices.

One of the essential modernness ideology elements was the emergence of the scheme the centre – the periphery. The idea of universality develops in literature (Goethe) and philosophy (Kant). Modernness occupies the centre of this imagined universality and sees itself as the main engine of progress. Europe (main European nations) aspires to rationalise and present as *reasonable* those elements, forces, and ideas that form it. The designing of the periphery and its colonization (the following stage) begin.

Modernness peripheries are not only a geographical concept. All spheres which should submit to European intellect turn into peripheries. Emotions and imagination form a close periphery of a reasonable soul or human consciousness. The village and traditional culture form the social and cultural periphery. Non-European (wild, primitive, unhistorical) peoples form a spatial and historical periphery. The periphery brings back to the centre numerous counter-modern ideas and projects. The intellect in this opposition becomes not only an instrument of criticism and rationalisation but also a tool of colonisation often perceived as an alien colonial force. Projects which aspire to call into question the intellect itself become opposed to it.

Thus, the history of the European periphery is not something external in relation to the processes of European modernness. It is their organic part. But at the same time it is its confidential hidden part. It is something that has never come to the surface of the

European cultural narrative. It is also something that was always absent on the level of representation though it was present on the reality level.

This history is only a part of the shadow side of European modernness, namely, of *internal colonialism*.

The reason is not that a part of today's European nations throughout their history were the objects of oppression and colonization from their stronger neighbours. It is not connected with the unsuccessful projects of a nation genesis within the borders of Europe itself (Provencal, Scottish, Welsh and so forth). It is not even about the peripheral nations which even today exist in the conditions of dependence.

Colonization processes are inseparable from European modernness but their bases, motivations and consequences have never been questioned.

Though European history unequivocally connects the processes of emergence of New Europe (European modernness) and European colonial project, these processes and colonisation subjects are usually moved to the margins of European thinking and are treated as an addition to the process of European rationality forming. It is an addition that is overcome in modern strategies of multiculturalism, tolerances, and respect for the Other etc.

Both marginal and additional statuses of the colonization phenomenon allowed to exclude the topic from classical Western theories of rationality from Max Weber to Michel Foucault and Jurgen Habermas. Despite this widespread stereotype the 80-90s brought understanding that the colonisation phenomenon is inseparable from the formation processes of the new European rationality. It is ciphered in its base oppositions and even structures this rationality.

As we have already said European modernness has put the rest of the world into the situation of colonial dependence. This situation of colonial collision leads to the emergence of anticolonial nationalisms. Late unfinished modernnesses of the *self-colonized* cultures, namely, the European shadow cultures (according to Kyosev). These new modernnesses approach the moment of appropriation of the universal in the process of overcoming its constitutive trauma. At this particular moment they hear from the West that the universality does not exist and that great narratives have definitively exhausted themselves along with the idea that *their modernnesses* should remain provincial, local, and unfinished projects forever. This is also connected with the fact that the colonial and imperial nations consider o*nly themselves* as universal and that is why they impose the image of the provincial, nativist, and anti-modern to all anticolonial nationalisms.

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Thus, our initial preconditions have been cleared up.

First of all, it is the pluralism of modernness trajectories or ways through modernness. It is the refusal of its standard content (E.Dussell).

Secondly, there is the ambivalence of the phenomenon consisting of different projects or different *promises of modernness* (I.Wallerstein).

Still, from where could we see our Eastern European borderland?

How shall the shadow history be written?

We believe that there are two things which are essential components of any possible genealogies.

The deconstruction of oppression codes and *the new reference to the cultural archive* are needed.

The first problem demands the deconstruction, analysis and decoding of configurations of power/knowledge in these or those Eastern Europe zones. There is also a need to analyze those codes and narratives in which Eastern Europe appears before Western knowledge. These codes changed throughout European history.

At the end of the 18th century it was the code of backwardness connected with the metanarrative of "progress". In the 19th century it was the image of "an ethnic person". In the 20th Eastern Europe became *the kingdom of ideology.*

New re-reading of the cultural archive provides reference to that very specific intellectual /ideological landscape that began to develop in Eastern Europe with the coming of modernness.

All this work should bring us back to the main questions.

What happened in the Eastern European laboratory of modernness? Where was Eastern Europe going? In what direction? Contrary to or towards modernness?!

In the context of these issues the research of local answers to the challenges of modernness do not have just local importance. They allow to outline the borders of universality and normativeness of modernness ideology, to reveal its hidden eurocentrism and, at last, to give a fuller picture of asynchronous modernisation, which results in the economic, cultural and sociopolitical heterogeneity of modern world where modernness has not come to an end yet for the majority of societies.

Notes

1 Wolff L. Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment. Stanford (Californ.): Stanford University Press, 1994. The translation into Russian was published in 2003: Larri Vulf. Izobretaja Vostochnuju Evropu. Karta tsivilizatsii v soznanii epohi Prosveshchenija. Moskva. NLO. 2003. It could be of great interest to study the work by Wolff not only in relation to the very Eastern European reality but as a certain disciplinary breakup with the models and schemes of Eastern European history of the founder of this sub-discipline Oskar Halecki. See Halecki O. Historia Europy – jej granice i podziały. Lublin: Instyt. Europy Środkowo Wschodniej, 1994.

2 See Bakić-Hayden M. Nesting Orientalism: The Case of Former Yugoslavia // Slavic Review. 1995. № 4 (54). P. 917–931; Gourgouris S. Dream Nation: Enlightenment, Colonization and the Institution of Modern Greece. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996; Todorova M. Imagining the Balkans. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997; Goldsworthy V. Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.

[3] Kyosau A. Samakalyanizavanyja kultury // "Fragmenty". 1999. №4. In the 90s we have a whole list of such inventions. For example, see Delanty G. Inventing Europe. Idea, Identity, Reality. New York, 1995. Inden R. Imagining India. Cambridge Oxford, 1990. Federici S. (Hg.). Enduring Western Civilization: The Construction of the Concept of Western Civilization and ist «Others». Westport (Conn.), 1995.

[5] There is a whole tradition of analysis of non-Western forms of modernness. See Chakrabarty D. Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern studies Chicago The University of Chicago Press, 2002. Dussell E. The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity New York: Continuum. Translated by Michael D. Barber. Therborn G. Multiculturality and East Central Europe in European Modernity. // Cultural Crossroads in Europe. Stockholm: FRN, 1997. Ss 22-41.

[6] Wallerstein I. The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century. New York: Academic Press, 1974.

[7] In his comment Woolf does not argue the place of Eastern Europe in the system of non-equivalent exchange of early capitalist (European) microeconomics. He just asserts that the image of periphery did not match this place as the periphery image has not been invented by Western intellectuals.

[8] Said, E. Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient. 3rd edn, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1991 (1978).

[9] Mignolo W. D. Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking. Princeton: PUP, 2000.

Mikola Bianko

GOMEL AND SEVASTOPOL ARE POSTCOLONIAL ANTIPODES

When the empire disappears like smoke,
Where will you be and with whom?
Band "Ulis"

The objective of the present research is to analyze the competition of neoimperial and postcolonial places of memory under the conditions of the development of official political projects of Belarus and Ukraine using the designing of the city space in Sevastopol and Gomel as the basis. Let us conduct a comparative analysis of neoimperial symbolical representations of the two cities of the transcultural Borderland, namely "the city of Russian military glory" Sevastopol and the most "unique in the Russian empire" privately owned city of Gomel to verify the thesis about the civilization predetermination of vectors of development of the former Russian colonies [13].

Both cities, despite their geographical remoteness and the existing cultural and ethnic distinctions inherent in their modern inhabitants, have much in common. Both Gomel and Ak-Yar-Akhtiyar-Sevastopol became a part of the Russian empire at the end of the 18th century. Indoctrinated by the ideology of the European Enlightenment representatives of Russian aristocracy who acquired new territories in their possession aspired to realize the utopian projects of ideally organized European cities. In the case of Sevastopol the favorite of Ekaterina II and serene prince Grigory Potyomkin lobbied the project of the creation of an empire southern capital in Taurida which would put the achievements of the empress regarding "making windows to the external world" on the same level with the European achievements of Peter I. Though this idea did not come true in the subsequent 19-20th centuries the mythologem of being the chosen one and the uniqueness of Sevastopol continued to draw the atten-

tion of Russian autocrats to this city. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian empire count Nikolay Rumyantsev treated Gomel as an original experimental platform for the introduction of innovative architectural decisions. Due to the efforts of Nikolay Rumyantsev Gomel was turned into an exemplary city of the empire from "an ordinary village on the bank of the river Sozh". Gomel historian Lion Vinogradov was more precise at the beginning of the 20th century and wrote that Nikolay Rumyantsev, "having found Gomel made of straw, left one half of it in stone" [17, p. 126].

When settling in a new place colonizers both in Sevastopol and Gomel did not take into account the universal artifacts testifying to deep historical roots of the two cities. For instance, the first Sevastopol buildings were erected from the well preserved ruins of ancient Chersonese under the guidance of Admiral Foma Fomich Mackenzi (Thomas Mak-kenzi) [23, 24]. The new authorities of Gomel, in turn, disassembled the medieval defensive castle to its very basis to construct a fashionable classicism palace in its place at the end of the 18th century. Thus, in both cases the empire got secured in new places eradicating the traces of the past alien to it.

The subordinated colonial administrative centers lived according to the mother country rhythm in the following centuries. The traditional continuity of the domination of the universal over the local lasted until 1991 when after the disintegration of the second Russian empire, the USSR, Sevastopol and Gomel found themselves within the administrative borders of new state formations. The moment of "separation" of these parts from the Russian civilization continent served as the starting point for the escalation of confrontation of imperial and anti-imperial discourses. The liminal condition of the mother country provoked the emancipation of former colonies aspiring to ideologically prove their right to an independent narrative. Despite the external similarity of the processes of development of national projects in Belarus and Ukraine, the internal logic of the development of these two subjects was essentially different.

Belarus, sharply experiencing its identity crisis, could not think of itself outside of the colonial frameworks during the initial stage of its independence. The coming to power in 1994 of the Pro-Russian populist Alexander Lukashenko who used the melancholy of the Belarus people about the Soviet "antiquity" to the maximum apparently was supposed to predetermine the irreversibility of the drift of Belarus to the empire embraces. However, the reunion scenario was not realized. The vector of the official political project of Belarus based on modified Pan-Slavism with certain elements of ethnonationalism, had the same orientation with the Russian neoimperialism at the initial stage. The example of symbolical representations allowed to speak about the gradual re-interpretation of the roles of the Russian cultural heroes who lost imperial "soil underneath their feet" and received "a local residence permit" for that. In other words, the local political project provided "the enslavement" of "the Other" at the expense of his being entered into the system of sign means of the official discourse. Paraphrasing Gayatri Spivak, the new political community, the Belarusian people, committed acts of epistemic violence over "the Other", asymmetrically destroying the traces of his doubtful Subjectness.[1] The mechanism of appropriation

of another culture heroes is the usual practice of the Borderland. The same historical figure or symbol, important in the sense of designing the imagined community, can serve as a precedent for the explanation of the national project simultaneously for several boundary ethnic groups. The context of this material allows to use the example of the talented captain of the Russian fleet Alexander Kazarsky whose image is used simultaneously by three ethnic groups (Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians) to justify the legitimacy of the presence in Sevastopol.

The protracted stage of transition from the subordinated colonial condition to the postcolonial subjectness in Belarusian reality did not mean a sudden rupture with imperial practices rather it was their gradual reconsideration. It is quite probable that exactly this specificity of transformation of Belarusian society determined quite a harmonious character of the construction of Gomel's symbolical space bordering on Russia. The conflict free policy of the official political project in Belarus in relation to the Russian narrative was developed as a result of the population's rejection of the radical anticolonial doctrine pursuing the aim of the deconstruction of the ideological foundation of empire existence. The society did not want to build its identity on the values of the first half of the 1990s offered by nationalists. In fact, many affective conditions experienced by many and the crisis of the well-being predetermined the emergence of a negative attitude to a short-term stage of the national revival. The rejection by mass consciousness of negative realities of the beginning of the 1990s led to the idealization of the Soviet period history which was considered by the authorities to be the starting point from the perspective of the Belarusian statehood genesis. The Soviet order nostalgia was most likely caused by the fact that the Belarusian modern nation was formed in the conditions of the BSSR. Accordingly, the colonial experience was not perceived by the majority of the population as negative, therefore, its commemorative potential was used by the authorities for the substantiation of the legality of its sources. In other words, after reaching the Belarusian ideological territory the imperial discourse was modified becoming a part of the only admissible version of the vision of the "general" Belarusian-Russian past. The establishment of the official political project was done with the help of the representatives of the spiritual pantheon of the Russian civilization whose precedential names form the imperial identity and are incorporated into the state ideology.This ambivalent tendency found its reflection in the Gomel city space construction.

In 1996 Gomel authorities made a decision to erect the monument to the Russian state chancellor Nikolay Rumyantsev. The initiative to commemmorate this hero of imperial history was not accompanied by any public resonance. A site just a few dozen meters from the main entrance to Rumyantsev and Paskevich's palace was allocated for the monument erection. The sculpture of one of the city owners who used the most advanced practice of the European town-planning for the development of Gomel at the turn of the 18-19th centuries actually marked the beginning of the restoration of the whole palace and park complex of the Rumyantsevs and Paskeviches. The bust of one of the most prominent Russian educators erected on a low pedestal personifies a new epoch of the rational space develop-

ment. The manner of Rumyantsev's representation portraying the count Nikolay Rumyantsev at least as Columbus (with a resolute look and a widely opened map of "city construction"),[2] reflects widespread stereotypes about the outstanding role of Russian managers in the revival of the culturally and economically backward North-western region. At the same time the recognition of Nikolay Rumyantsev's great contribution to the development of Gomel and his adherence to the principles of the European Enlightenment were embodied in a rather low monument. The bust is mounted on a stocky pedestal with the patrimonial arms of the count with the motto NON SOLO ARMIS (not only by force of weapons). Just below the family symbol of the Rumyantsevs one can see the inscription, "To Rumyantsev Nikolay Pyatrovich from the citizens of the city of Gomel".[3] The text on the monument written in Belarusian along with the specifying of a concrete geographical location (citizens of Gomel) testifies to a certain tendency of the visualization of representations about certain Russian heroes. This tendency is expressed in the appropriation by the Belarusian authorities as the transmitter of the official political project of the exclusive right to the interpretation of signs showing the presence of "the Other". The monument to the owner of the Gomel manor, namely, to the count Nikolay Rumyantsev is an original simulacrum, called upon to embody the commonality of sources of the Belarusian-Russian statehood. The monument founders are not really interested in the "Russian" origin and imperial representations of its prototype, or, specficially, the chancellor Rumyantsev. They are much more attracted by his being "a powerful business executive" welcomed by the ideologists of the Belarusian statehood. The hybrid character of the given memory place symbolizing simultaneously two discourses (modified imperial and official Belarusian) can be explained by the reference to the liminal condition of Belarusian society undergoing through a qualitative transition from the colonial one to the independent subject existence. As a representative of symbolical anthropology Victor Turner said, the studying of liminal stages is most fruitful from the point of view of emergence of a set of ambivalent symbols. According to Turner, ambiguous and uncertain properties of liminality are expressed in "a big variety of symbols in numerous societies ritualizing social and cultural transitions" [20].

Such mechanisms of inclusion of the mother country culture representatives in the official political project[4] were also observed during later periods. For instance, the monument to "the last mistress" of the city princess Irina Paskevich was erected in Gomel in 2003. Irina Paskevich being a patron and a public figure paid most attention to the development of the city infrastructure and donated considerable sums of money to maintain public poorhouses. After the Bolshevist revolution in 1917 the princess voluntarily refused her property having transferred it to the new authorities. The construction of the monument was accompanied by the renaming of a small part of Pervomajskaya street into Irininskaya street, that, most likely, was supposed to symbolize the reaching of a compromise between two earlier incompatible ideologies: orthodox-communistic and imperial. The sculpture executed in a modernist style and well-blended into the surroundings does not possess any monumental lines. There are benches near the monument allowing townspeople to rest. This shows the desire of the initiators of the idea to also create the atmosphere of cozi-

ness and ease. A prominent feature of the monument erected in Irininskaya street consists in the depersonified character of the given memory place. The monument is deprived of any signs of the appeal to its prototype. More likely, the creators of the statue managed to embody the image of "the Golden Age" of Gomel which coincided with the period of the Russian political domination in the 19th century. The tablet with the inscription in Russian saying "to Irina Ivanovna Paskevich from grateful Gomel dwellers" is the only reminder about the connection between the monument and a specific person. This example allows us to observe a similar technology of placing a hero of the Russian cultural pantheon in the conditions of the Belarusian postcolonial reality just like in the case with the monument to N. Rumyantsev. Both monuments materialize the interosculation of imperial and Belarusian discourses unexpectedly reproducing dual symbolical representations simultaneously possessing signs of various world outlook systems.

Thus, the coexistence of various imperious discourses in the conditions of the cultural borderland is quite a natural phenomenon though one should keep in mind that at the crossing points of this cultural borderland there emerge semiotics systems most adequately reflecting the components of the new forming Belarusian identity. The memory place created administratively is a discourse practice carrying out the identification of subjects with a new community created in transcultural space.

The decolonization of post-Soviet Sevastopol followed the scenario of collision and confrontation of colonial (imperial) and anticolonial (Ukrainian) discourses. The carriers of imperial consciousness underwent a painful process of apprehending the sovereignization of Ukraine in 1991 as the result of which "the city of Russian military glory" Sevastopol ceased to legally belong to the mother country. Russian philosopher A.K Shevchenko stated that "national semeiosis" plays a key role in the formation of identities [28]. The researcher believes that an important component of any national project is the so-called case phenomena the presence of which allows community members feel their unity. Historical events serving as the basis for the construction of national mythologems are examples of similar case phenomena. If the disintegration of the USSR which led to the separation of Sevastopol is a painful event for the citizens of the Russian Federation then it is quite natural that Ukrainians would evaluate the given precedent from the position of historical justice. The city's sacralization practices indicate the existence of the painful perception by the Pro-Russian inhabitants of Sevastopol of the events connected with Ukraine's acquisition of independence. The presence of "the award on Europe's chest" as a part of the Ukrainian state formation is characterized exclusively through emotional categories of «the third defense of Sevastopol" [19]. Numerous texts devoted to the "liberating" struggle of Great Russians with "just another group of invaders" prove that the adherents of the Russian world see themselves on the front line of the civilization struggle against the perfidious West. The agents of influence of the hostile Anglo-Saxon world are the carriers of the Ukrainian idea. Accordingly, any attempts to define and bring out the Ukrainian presence in Sevastopol's space encounter the resistance of Russian patriots. Moreover, Pro-

Russian townsmen aspire to underline in every possible way their cultural domination by establishing new places of memory.

A peculiar feature of Sevastopol mythologem is its integrated approach combining together the legends about the Crimean war (1853-1856) and the epos about the city defense during the days of the Second World War. The most exact embodiment of Sevastopol mythologem is the formula "Sevastopol is the city of Russian military glory". The foundation of such a heroic city cult could probably be found in Leo Tolstoy's debut literary works from the series "Sevastopol stories" describing heroism of Russian officers and soldiers during the Crimean war. Despite the fact that the military campaign initiated by the Russian czar Nikolay I failed having exposed the structural problems of the empire, the commemorative potential of heroic Sevastopol became needed again half a century later. During the Russian-Japanese war the authorities again used a myth about the firmness of the Russian soldier who would not spare his stomach for the sake of the commander. It helped to politically mobilize the population. In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Crimean campaign a well-known monument "Panorama" was erected in the city to represent the scenes of Sevastopol's heroic defense in 1854-1855. During the same period the city acquired its symbol, namely, a monument to the flooded ships. The mythologem "unsubdued" Russian city was not claimed until the second defense of Sevastopol in 1941-1942.

In 1954 during Nikita Khrushchev's administration the Crimean area was included into the structure of the USSR to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the "reunion" of Russia and Ukraine as well as to support numerous economic relations with this Soviet republic. Sevastopol, being a closed military object in the subsequent decades, had a special administrative status of the republican submission. The second wave of memoralization of the heroic deeds of "unassailable" Sevastopol rose only during the cold war epoch. However, the places of memory created during that period did not place a separate Russian narrative outside the borders of the heroic deeds of the Soviet people. Therefore, the disintegration of the USSR in 1991 can be considered a new reference point of the re-created Russian imperial tradition.

Already the first years of the existence of independent Ukraine showed world outlook contradictions laid in the most Russified institute of the Soviet society, i.e., the army. As the army was the main carrier of the Soviet ideology then the influence of the given structure on the formation of the Anti-Ukrainian values and beliefs of the closed city inhabitants was in many respects defining. The Soviet liminal period provoked the situation of an ideological vacuum that was subsequently filled with the reinterpreted pre-revolutionary practices and imperial symbols. The updated narrative of Sevastopol as "the city of Russian military glory" became the most demanded tool in the conditions of the local struggle against the Ukrainian discourse. The so-called war of memory places shows how radical the character of the local Russian political project developed in the conditions of the Ukrainian state is.

French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs believed that group memory is most visible in actions on immortalization [26]. So the creation by a group of some symbols or material carriers of memory is predetermined by the existing frameworks of collective memory.

According to Maurice Halbwachs's idea, there are as many collective memories are there are groups. Differing visions of certain events influencing a substantial part of political projects of various groups can actually provoke the conflicts of memory concepts.

The situation with Sevastopol is an excellent chance to observe the competition of carriers of two identity types such as imperial and Ukrainian. The contrast of the directions of national political projects makes it impossible to reach an intergroup consensus concerning the symbols designing identity. It is impossible to speak about the rapprochement of positions in the conditions of an uncompromising opposition. It is much more likely that the representatives of both groups will use all possible means to deprive each other of the ideological bases regarding their coexistence in one cultural space. When looking at the example of Belarusian Gomel one can see the use of the "enslavement" mechanism and the deprivation of the voice of "the Other" by entering him into the semiotics system so typical for the representatives of the title nation. When dealing with Sevastopol one immediately notices mutual "deleting" of group memories. The simplest way of eliminating a dangerous contender attacking the identity of the other is by erecting its own places of the memory alien to the hostile influence. The disintegration of the USSR left a deep trace in the consciousness of Sevastopol inhabitants. The reconstruction of the new imperial identity denying the right of Ukrainians to carry out an independent memory policy became an alternative to the dissolution in the Ukrainian project. The researcher of the commemorative consciousness phenomenon Pierre Nora considers the term "memory place" an adequate metaphor representing those elements of collective memory which consolidate group identity [30]. Applying the paradigm offered by Pierre Nora, it is possible to say that both material carriers of memory (monuments, architectural structures, works of art etc.) and pieces of spiritual culture recognized by all members of society (a song, folklore, ceremonies etc.) could serve as places of memory for this or that group.

The hymn of Sevastopol is an example of a memory place exposed to the intensive influences from carriers of two types of confronting identities. In 1954 Soviet composer Vano Muradeli in co-authorship with poet Peter Gradov created the composition "Legendary Sevastopol" to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the first heroic defense of the city. The song contained the refrain "Sevastopol, Sevastopol is the pride of Russian seamen" that excluded the possibility of various perceptions of the "national" component of the city identity. In 1994 the song was proclaimed the hymn of the city by the decision of the Sevastopol city council of People's Deputies [10]. In 2006 the hymn became another Ukrainian-Russian stumbling block because of the emergence of the Ukrainian variant of the text. The author of the new hymn version and at the same time the captain of the Ukrainian Naval Forces Miroslav Mamchak did not just present a direct translation of the Russian text. He added basic plots of Ukrainian history such as Kiev prince Vladimir, christening of Russia, Cossack valor, etc. On top of that the Ukrainian version contained no reference to the heroism of Russian sailors. Representatives of the Russian community in Ukraine treated it as mockery.

The second indicative example of the struggle of the symbolical representations of two political projects in space of Sevastopol is the erection of the monument to the Russian empress Catherine II. The doctrine of the supporters of the Russian world ideologem clearly identifies the key role of the empress in the creation of Sevastopol. However, this has not been proved by real historical facts. The obvious discrepancy of the facts did not prevent pro-Russian Sevastopol inhabitants from initiating the erection of the monument to Catherine II on the threshold of the city's 225th anniversary. Despite the direct resistance of the authorities, active members of the Russian block opened the monument to the "founder" of the city. The installation of the monument took place in uneasy political conditions. The immediate dismantle of the monument was prevented only by the presence of several hundred persons including Cossacks, deputies of the city council and Sevastopol inhabitants. In later years this monument to Catherine II became the object of an attack of unknown persons forcing pro-Russian Cossacks to bear the round-the-clock sentry around the monument. The answer of the city authorities to the illegal arbitrariness of the representatives of Russian community was quite similar. The same day, June 15th, 2008, the monument to the Ukrainian hetman Peter Sagajdachny was erected in Gagarinsky district of Sevastopol. The importance of that event was strengthened by the solemn address of the president of Ukraine V. Jushchenko read by the city head Sergey Kunitsyn. When addressing the people present at the monument opening S. Kunitsyn declared "that now nobody has doubts that Sevastopol is the Ukrainian city" [7].

The examples of confrontation on the symbolical field described above should be connected with the increase of the role of group identities of Russians and Ukrainians living in Sevastopol. So, the researcher of ethnopolitical processes of mutiny and conflicts T.Garr believes that the increase of intergroup intensity depends on three external factors: 1) the acuteness of a group's infringement in comparison with other groups; 2) the degree of cultural differences between a group and other groups with which the given group co-operates; 3) the sharpness of the conflict with other groups and the state [6]. The Sevastopol case suggests that there is an externally inspired destabilizing aspiration from the former mother country trying to satisfy its geopolitical ambitions by stimulating inter-ethnic intensity. In particular, the so-called language problem of the Crimea which seems to be a constant preoccupation of high-ranking Russian officials is obviously exaggerated for Sevastopol. Researchers observe the language disparity in the Crimea in favor of the Russian language, "The cumulative circulation of newspapers in Ukrainian, Crimean-Tatar and all other languages makes only 5 % of the total amount" [21]. According to the research results, the rest of the Crimean press consists of publications in Russian. The situation is quite similar with the use of the Ukrainian language in the education system. Hence, 95,6% of pupils in the Crimea receive education in Russian [21]. Accordingly, the argument about the language discrimination of Russians as the strongest (quantity wise) ethnic group making 58,3 % of the aggregate number of Crimea inhabitants is quite manipulative. The aggravation of the conflict with the second largest ethnic group including the Ukrainian inhabitants of the peninsula is possible only as a result of some drama event. However, at

the same time the approaching of the Russian Federation Black Sea navy withdrawal date in 2017 from the Crimea transforms this territory into the object of information influence. Such a conclusion helps to understand the mechanism of penetration to the ideological territory of the former colony of the imperial discourse destructive for the Ukrainian statehood. On the one hand, the intensification of rituals to immortalize the heroes of the Russian narrative is caused by the increase of the role of the group identity needing its own available places of memory. On the other hand, liking of certain social groups in relation to Russian ideology can be justified by the use of purposeful actions of the former mother country aspiring to disintegrate Ukrainian society. Both the first and the second variants do not mutually exclude each other and they actually can promote a more successful advancement of "Russian" neoimperial values in Belarusian society.

Thus, the Sevastopol monument to Empress Catherine II erected in 2008 upon the initiative of the active members of the Russian nationalist organizations is quite interesting from the point of view of visualization of colonial meanings. Belarusian researcher A.Kazakevich notes that the most superficial level of reflection over the subordinated object within the framework of the colonial discourse is the imposing of functionality upon it for "the other". It means that the colonized object is intended "to provide space for the mother country activity" and to be ideologically connected to it [11]. In this context the main function of the monument to Catherine put up in Sevastopol is the transmitting of imperial meanings. The bronze monument created in the style of pseudo classicism with the total height of 6,35m identifies the colonial status of Sevastopol. It is expressed in the inscription on the top part of the pedestal, "The decree about the founding of Sevastopol (…) by this we declare our will to build the following fortifications: … a big Sevastopol Fortress where nowadays Akhtiyar is and where there should be Admiralty, a shipyard for the first rank ships, a port and a military settlement. EKATERINA". Analysis of the given text message reveals the directive character of the relations between the centre and the periphery the tasks of which include the realization of the will imposed from above. The empire displayed in the monument to Catherine gives accurate instructions about the mission of the future settlement. Aggressive locking on new cultural bases is seen in the precedence of the organization of the military infrastructure (a fortress, a shipyard, a port, and a military settlement). Nothing is said about any partner and equal contacts between the mother country and the colony as only the unconditional and categorical discourse of the imperial power permeates the whole text. One more interesting feature of the text message is the ignoring by the monument founders of the local context set by the frameworks of the Ukrainian political project. An actually authoritative style of the message on Catherine's monument underlines the reduced subjectness of Sevastopol which is denied the right to independence. Thus, the fate of the abandoned southern capital of the empire is the eternal border condition. According to its complex mythologem Sevastopol carries out the role of the advanced post of the empire standing on the civilization break. Consequently, the ideologem of the guarding city protecting the empire from external threats cannot be entered

into the frameworks of the anti-imperial Ukrainian political project. These ideas found their reflection in the monument to the Russian empress Catherine II.

The research of neoimperial symbolical representations in the postcolonial conditions of Gomel and Sevastopol points at different tendencies in the designing of the city space of both cities. Due to the existing differences in practices used to immortalize the cultural heroes of the Russian narrative Gomel and Sevastopol represent two different models used to visualize imperial discourses. So the mechanism of entering outstanding empire figures into the category of transcultural heroes belonging to both Russians and Belarusians is characteristic of Gomel. Such a tendency is determined by the one-sided direction of neoimperial and official Belarusian political projects. This strategy of the reinterpretation of colonial senses allows to avoid confrontational displays at the stage of society's luminal condition. Ukrainian Sevastopol allows to see the semiology of the so-called war of memory places. The monuments to Russian statesmen aimed at preserving the colonial condition of the city's cultural landscape contradict the Ukrainian national project that is anticolonial in essence. As a matter of fact, the forming of the local Russian counter project aspiring to de-legitimize the Ukrainian presence in the city of "Russian military glory" takes place in Sevastopol.

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Notes

1 Main postulates of the official political project are reflected in the ideology of the Belarusian state consolidating Soviet values such as collectivism, social equality, paternalist setting, and state patriotism in mass consciousness.

2 The heroic deed of Gnat Shevchenko, a sailor-hero of the Crimean war, who protected lieutenant Birilev with his body from the bullet is very well known.

3 Encyclopedias and biographical research provide information that the initiative to build a new town in Akhtiyar bay in 1783 belonged to Foma Fomich Mackkenzie (Scott Thomas Mackenzie) [23,23].

4 The journalist of "The Russian World Newspaper" Pavel Dulman said that "due to the clashes between the mayor of Sevastopol and deputies of the city council the event was almost turned into a secret event. The white cover was removed from the monument in the morning at half past seven according to local time." [8]

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Center for Advanced Studies and Education (CASE) on Social Transformation in the Western Eurasia Border Region – Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine

The Center for Advanced Studies and Education (CASE) on Social Transformation in the Western Eurasian Border Region was established in 2003 with funding from the Carnegie Corporation of New York to American Councils for International Education. CASE is a vital research center which works to strengthen research on social transformation in the region, improve the system of higher education in social science and the humanities, and form effective networks of university academics and scholars. CASE is affiliated with the European Humanities University (EHU), but is open to participation by eligible scholars throughout the three-nation region Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine.

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– Promote interdisciplinary collaboration;
– Strengthen vital partnerships with affinity organizations;
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– Publishing the scholarly journal *Perekrestki*;
– Publishing the volume of the English language digest;
– Publishing the scholarly monographs;
– Maintaining the library of resources for scholars
– Introducing intensive short-term seminars on social sciences methods.

The main topics proposed by CASE include, but are not limited to:

– The border region in between the East Partnership and post-imperial Russia;
– Energy issues in international relations in the West Eurasia Region;
– The world economic crisis as a political force on the regional scale;
– Old and new minorities and the practices of official identity; and
– Language, identity, and education in an era of transformation.